



Comhlámh  
Code of Good Practice



A HANDBOOK

# Gestalt inspired activities for working with groups

Compiled by  
Asier Carrasco González

# About Comhlámh

Established in 1975, Comhlámh is the Irish association of international development workers and volunteers. As a membership organization, we build and mobilise community around global justice issues. Comhlámh nurtures and supports work for change, locally and globally, and advocates for a world beyond injustice.

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# Foreword

**Reflection, connection & community: A handbook of Gestalt-inspired activities for the Comhlámh Code of Good Practice Network and beyond**

In 2024, I was invited by Comhlámh to prepare a Gestalt-inspired training for members of their Code network. I was very excited by the idea. I have been working around youth work, community building and facilitation for years now and have always been interested in bringing together what is already out there and supporting groups to knit their personal experiences and contributions into a communal tapestry that is working for them and useful in their context.

I started my own Gestalt journey a few years back with an international training in Gestalt Theatre – it was a beautiful group, and the experience made me very curious to explore it further. Following the training, I decided to take part in a one-year therapy group with the Gestalt Institute in Barcelona, to see and explore in my own body what Gestalt was and beyond the theatre part I had experienced.

Spoiler: it was a bit of the same, and much more. The Gestalt Theatre training taught me a lot of the Gestalt foundations, and as I entered, I realised that I was more



than ready to use Gestalt in education and as part of a therapeutic group. With time, I became convinced that this was a powerful tool for me, as a community educator and facilitator, to bring my proposals further—to support personal experiences and contributions to be part of a tapestry as well as personal journeys of growth and development for those taking part. Gestalt is an invitation to dive deep, with support and care, but deeper than other ways I had experienced. It is something I have grown to treasure so much that I am about to embark on my final training year as a Gestalt therapist.

Now, back to Comhlámh! Alongside the Comhlámh training in 2024 came the idea of creating a wee Gestalt-inspired handbook – one that could be implemented by Comhlámh members in their realities. In pulling the handbook together, I collected activities from my own learning that I thought could be useful. Some were from Gestalt trainings I had taken part in, while others were from more general trainings and could have a Gestaltic layer applied to them.

Still, something didn't sit right. I started to get a feeling that something was missing. I let it be, I breathed and kept working. I was sure it would come to me— through conversations with practitioners from Comhlámh, mentors at the Gestalt Institut or the drafting process itself. I'll tell you soon what it was.

First, I want to acknowledge that all the activities in this handbook originate from somewhere else. I have collected them, tweaked them for whatever I wanted the activity to address and given them a common shape, but they didn't originate with me. Many came to me because I was lucky

to experience them in one place or another, under the caring generosity of other educational craftspeople who facilitated them for the benefit of many (me included).

In this handbook, I have included the original sources / authors of activities where possible. Where the original source/author is unknown to me, I have listed the source as my own community course notes. Either way, my intention with this handbook is not to 'steal' activities from anyone but rather to honour them by giving them a platform such as this – a handbook that aims to do something as important as supporting people who work with people. I want to thank all who have brought these activities to life— either by creating them or by using them and making them thrive.

Now, back to that uneasy feeling. I had a few conversations with Fiachra and Sive from Comhlámh – wonderful humans and great professionals in their field – and with Silvia, one of my mentors at the Institut – also a wonderful human and someone that can make Gestalt accessible to anyone. These conversations made me realize there was still one question unanswered in the gathering of these activities:



# What makes an activity Gestaltic?

## How do you facilitate gestaltically?

The first thing I thought about was this thing called the “Gestaltic attitude.” Sergi, one of my teachers at the Gestalt Institut, defines it in his book *Vivir aquí y ahora* as “a way of approaching existence, a way of relating with the world and oneself; at the end, a life philosophy that implies a certain attitude with oneself, with others, and, in general, with life” (Forgas Berdet, S. 2022); but most importantly, “The Gestaltic attitude we are going to speak of is not something that you can acquire only from theoretical postulates, but it is a process of maturation through experience.”

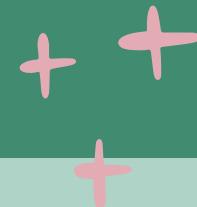
And here is the uneasiness I felt. I facilitate the activities from a wealth of experience—many of the last ones in a Gestaltic context—having gone through Gestalt training, therapy, group process. My facilitation is, in a way, phenomenological: it depends on the here and now of the group, and on me; it depends on the field where it is happening; it depends on my personal lived experience.

In a way, I feel it is unfair to drop a document onto others that is full of activities related to Gestalt only to tell the reader that to facilitate them you need to have experienced Gestalt one way or another. I think what I want to say here is that even without ‘Gestalt training’, you can try these activities. What is needed is that you rely on your own experience—on what you have lived, on former

training and activities... and that you use this base to take the activities in this handbook wherever you can.

I hope you have the opportunity, if you haven’t yet, to experience some Gestalt in your life—for me, it has been life-changing. Above all, I hope you have fun and grow through applying these activities in your settings, whatever those might be.

Warm hugs,  
Asier



### Asier Carrasco González

Asier is a dynamic and passionate educator, youth worker, and consultant with over two decades of experience across local, national, and international levels. Holding a BSc (Hons) in Animal Biology and Conservation from Edinburgh Napier University, Asier brings a diverse range of expertise and a deep commitment to empowering young people. Since 1997, they have worked with various youth organisations, playing pivotal roles in public, private, and third sectors.

As a seasoned freelance trainer and facilitator, Asier’s areas of expertise are as diverse as their interests—ranging from Learning Theories and Human Rights Education to Sustainability, Gender, and innovative Learning Methodologies. Their curiosity has led them to explore new areas of growth, including Clowning, Storytelling, Story Therapy, and Gestalt Therapy, which they are currently studying. Asier’s approach is grounded in creativity, inclusivity, and a passion for lifelong learning.



## A few words from the Comhlámh team

For over 20 years, Comhlámh has supported a network of Volunteer Sending Agencies through the Comhlámh Code of Good Practice. As echoed in the most recent edition of the Code, reflection, connection and community have always been central to the work:

*"The Code aims to support and to challenge, accompanying a journey of reflection and change. It seeks to strengthen practice within living, learning organisations who are open to new approaches and willing to seek out emerging ways of being, even if these are not always clear and easily defined. It is not about ticking boxes to achieve*

*a narrowly defined status which fits neatly into a photo frame. Perfection is not the goal – mistakes are part of the process and vital for learning within a continuously evolving process that we are all part of. (Comhlámh Code of Good Practice, pg. 5)"*

None of this is easy. How do we genuinely open ourselves up to new approaches? How do we hold space for the contradictions in our work? How do we confront power imbalances and complicity in harmful systems while generating momentum for new ways of doing? How do we stay on the path of reflection, and not become overwhelmed or burnt out?

One thing we have learned over the years is that relationships based in care and honest communication and time for process offer important foundations for this work. The activities in this handbook offer an opportunity for you and your team to explore these two elements in an intentional way and to build up the base that we know is already there.

We are deeply grateful for all the care and thought that Asier put into the handbook.

Enjoy exploring it and let us know how you get on!

The Comhlámh Team

September 2025

\*While this handbook has been devised for the Comhlámh Code network, the activities will resonate with the wider Comhlámh community and beyond. Please feel free to use and share widely.



# Gestalt?

## Is this handbook for me?

If you are someone who facilitates learning, dialogue, or group processes and you are interested in bringing more presence and awareness into your practice, then this handbook is here to help. It isn't a manual to teach you Gestalt or to "get it right," but rather an invitation to lead activities that invite more presence, curiosity and grounded-ness.

Gestalt isn't something you can fully grasp through theory or reading. It's lived. It's embodied. It's practiced.

And you don't need to be a Gestalt therapist to bring Gestalt into your work with groups.

Beyond the tools and exercises, what truly shapes experience is how we show up – our presence, our awareness, our way of being with others.

Here below you will find some simple but powerful principles that help make any activity more Gestaltic – meaning more connected, more alive, and more human.

## What Makes an Activity “Gestaltic”?

A Gestaltic activity isn't about what you do – it's how you do it. You could be running a common game, a sharing circle, or a creative task. The key is to centre experience in the present moment and support participants to connect with themselves and each other.

### CORE GESTALT INGREDIENTS:

- **Here and Now Focus** – Keep attention on what people are sensing, feeling, and thinking right now. Use questions like: “*What are you aware of in this moment?*”
- **Awareness & Embodiment** – Invite people to tune into their bodies and emotions: “*Notice your breath,*” “*What do you feel in your body as you say that?*”
- **Personal Responsibility** – Encourage “*I*” statements and ownership: “*I feel frustrated,*” not “*this activity is frustrating us.*”
- **Experimentation** – Frame activities as open-ended experiments. Be curious. Try things. There's no right way to do it.
- **Relational Presence** – Show up as a real human, not just a facilitator. Be in contact. If something feels off, say it with care.

## Facilitating with a Gestalt Attitude

Being Gestalt-informed is more about your attitude than about specific tools. Here are a few principles that can help you show up in that way:

- **Be curious, not judgmental** – Ask open “*what*” and “*how*” questions. Stay with experience, not explanation.

- **Focus on process, not just stories** – Pay attention to tone, body language, shifts in energy. Say what you notice: “*I'm sensing the group feels a bit distant right now.*”
- **Follow the energy** – If something unexpected arises (laughter, tension, tears), it probably matters. Be willing to pause your plan and stay with it.
- **Support contact, notice resistance** – If someone pulls away or the group disconnects, gently name it. That's often where something meaningful lives.
- **Stay experiential** – Let people feel, sense, and explore before analysing. “*What are you feeling now?*” instead of “*Why do you think that is?*”
- **Prioritise presence over perfection** – It's more important that you're real and grounded than that you “*get it right.*” Be honest. Breathe. Show up.

## Inviting Emotional Depth Safely

Gestalt work often touches emotions. That's not a problem – that's the beauty of it. But it's important to hold space with care.

- **Create a safe container** – Set up agreements. Make space for people to say no or pass. Normalize all feelings.
- **Invite, don't push** – You can say, “*You're welcome to share if it feels okay,*” or “*Take your time.*” Respect boundaries.
- **Support grounding** – If emotions run high, slow things down. “*Take a breath. Notice your feet on the floor.*”

- **Know your limits** – You're not a therapist. If something feels too big, pause. Refer if needed. Always prioritise care and containment.
- **Help integrate** – After emotional moments, gently support reflection: *"What are you aware of now, after sharing that?"*

## Flexibility is Key

Being Gestaltic means being responsive. Things don't always go as planned – and that's okay.

- **Read the room** – Notice group energy. Adapt pace, format, or activity if needed. Check in openly: *"Would a change of pace help right now?"*
- **Work with what's here** – Whatever shows up is the material. Go with it, rather than trying to fix or force something.
- **Use your instincts** – Your reactions often carry useful information. If you're feeling confused, tired, energised – check if the group is too.
- **Be transparent** – If you change direction, let people know why. Involve them in the process when it feels right.
- **Let go of the script** – It's not about doing it "correctly." It's about making it real.

## Using Gestalt-Informed Language

Your words shape the space. Here are some shifts that support Gestalt values:

- **Present tense** – *"What are you noticing now?"*
- **First person** – *"I feel..."* instead of generalisations.
- **Simple, human language** – Avoid jargon. Say it in your own voice.
- **Supportive tone** – Be warm, curious, and kind.
- **Use more statements** – Sometimes naming what you see is more powerful than asking.
- **Examples:**

*"Take a moment to check in with your body."*

*"What stood out to you in that exercise?"*

*"It's okay to feel whatever you're feeling."*

*"Would you like to try something out with me?"*

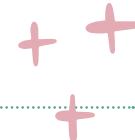
*"You're in charge of your pace here."*

## Final Words

Facilitating in a Gestalt-informed way isn't about technique – it's about presence, curiosity, and connection. You are not there to fix or analyse. You are there to notice, support, and explore together. Remember: the goal is not perfection. It's awareness.

# ACTIVITIES

Theme	Activities in this handbook
<b>Awareness &amp; Presence</b> <p>Activities to heighten awareness of self, others, and surroundings, anchoring participants firmly in the "here and now."</p> <p><b>SUB-THEMES:</b> Mindfulness and grounding; Sensory and perceptual awareness; Self-observation and internal reflection</p>	<b>CURIOUS EXPLORATION</b> <b>OBSERVING THE OBVIOUS</b> <b>AWARENESS WALK</b> <b>EXAGGERATION</b> <b>LISTENING TO THE ENVIRONMENT</b> <b>SOCIO-GRAM IN MOTION</b>
<b>Communication &amp; Dialogue</b> <p>Activities to foster authentic, clear, and empathetic communication, deep listening, and interpersonal understanding.</p> <p><b>SUB-THEMES:</b> Active listening and resonant responses; Non-verbal communication and embodied dialogue; Conflict resolution and difficult conversation</p>	<b>WHOSE SHOE IS THIS?</b> <b>MIRROR OF VOICES</b> <b>COLUMBIAN HYPNOSIS</b> <b>IF I WERE BRAVE ENOUGH</b> <b>RESONANT LISTENING</b> <b>MIRRORING MOVEMENT</b>



## Embodiment & Movement

Activities promoting body awareness, expression through movement, and connection between mind and body.

**SUB-THEMES:** Physical grounding and centring exercises; Expressive and creative movement; Contact and boundaries through touch and spatial

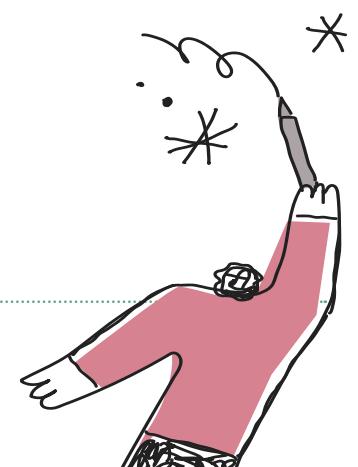
**FEELING POSTURES**  
**EMBODIED DANCE**  
**STATUE OF MYSELF**  
**CLAY STATUE**  
**EMOTIONAL SCULPTORS**

## Emotional Intelligence & Expression

Activities to identify, explore, express, and manage emotions constructively and authentically.

**SUB-THEMES:** Recognizing and naming emotions; Safe emotional expression; Emotional self-regulation and resilience

**EMOTIONAL ROOMS**



## ACTIVITIES

### Creative Experimentation & Improvisation

Activities that use creativity, improvisation, and experimentation to explore new behaviours and perspectives.

**SUB-THEMES:** Theatre-based methods (Gestalt Theatre, Playback Theatre, Improv); Role-playing and creative problem-solving; Encouraging flexibility, adaptability, and spontaneity

#### ANIMAL ARCHETYPES

#### WHAT IS YOUR CHARACTER?

### Boundaries & Consent

Activities to recognize, communicate, and respect personal and group boundaries.

**SUB-THEMES:** Understanding personal limits; Practicing saying "yes" and "no"; Negotiating boundaries in relationships and group

#### BACK-TO-BACK

#### YES/NO BOUNDARY EXERCISE

#### BLIND-TRUST WALK

#### BLIND EXPLORATION

#### BOUNDARIES WALK



### Conflict Transformation & Difficult Conversations

Activities for engaging constructively and reflectively with conflict and challenging interactions.

**SUB-THEMES:** Creative adjustment in conflict; Non-violent communication techniques; Navigating sensitive topics and discomfort

#### CREATIVE ADJUSTMENT WITH CONFLICT

### Reflection & Integration

Activities for reflective practice, integration of learning, and translating insights into practical action.

**SUB-THEMES:** Journaling, drawing, and metaphor-based reflections; Group reflections and sharing insights; Translating awareness into actionable steps

#### EMOTIONAL TIMELINE

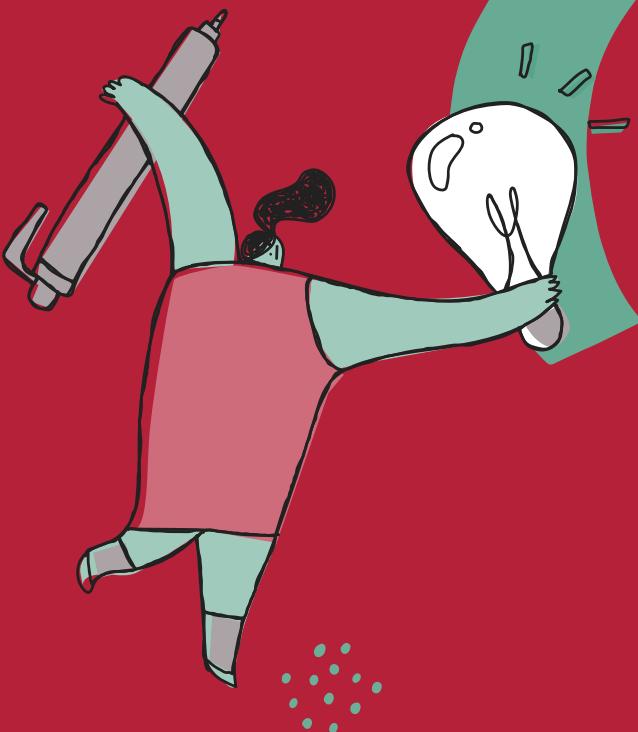
#### FANTASY JOURNEY: THE CABIN

#### METAPHORICAL SUITCASE

#### HEADLINE: WHAT ARE YOU SEEKING?



# Activities



## 1. Curious Exploration



**Purpose:** This activity aims to heighten sensory awareness, curiosity, and mindfulness towards one's surroundings and others, promoting connection and empathy.

**Main theme:** Awareness & Presence

**Secondary themes:** Embodiment & Movement, Communication & Dialogue

**Duration:** 30 - 40 minutes

**Materials:** None. Some light music would be useful when participants start bringing the attention inwards.

### Description/Instructions

Invite participants to silently and mindfully explore the room. Encourage them to notice textures, colours, sounds, and other sensory details. Remind them that this is their space (could be for the morning, the day or the year). Invite them to explore it with a child-like attitude.

After approximately 10 minutes, instruct participants to start bringing their awareness to themselves (inwards), to move around the room focusing attention on their breathing, the way they are placing their feet on the floor - first the heel and so on or. If they are using a walking stick or wheelchair, their points of contact with the stick and/or chair.

After a few minutes invite them, still in their walk and looking at their feet, to slowly expand awareness to the other people in the room, observing subtly through peripheral vision.

Guide participants to keep walking in silence, observing other people's feet, then knees, slowly moving up to gently make eye contact.

Remember to guide the participants, emphasizing curiosity without judgement or interpretation (it is ok if there is, just let them be aware of it).

Conclude with a brief sharing in the circle about experiences and discoveries. What did they do? What did they want to do that they didn't do? What was behind the action they took or didn't?

Source: Awareness: Exploring, Experimenting, Experiencing by John O. Stevens, adapted from chapter on sensory awareness exercises (p. 40-42).



## 2. Embodied Dance



**Purpose:** This activity aims to foster embodiment, enhance awareness of physical sensations, and promote creative expression and group cohesion.

**Main theme:** Embodiment & Movement

**Secondary themes:** Awareness & Presence, Group Dynamics & Collective Care

**Duration:** 25 min

**Materials:** Music player/speaker, suitable music for dancing (upbeat-to-calming).

**Description/Instructions:** Participants pair up and start gently touching fingertips, slowly increasing movements in a playful manner (as if playing piano quickly). Gradually, movements expand to wrists, elbows, shoulders, neck, head, hips, knees, and finally feet, always maintaining previous movements. When the facilitator notices participants are fully engaged, music is introduced. Participants dance freely in pairs, gradually merging with other pairs, eventually forming a large circle. The facilitator then guides participants to stop, close their eyes, and notice bodily sensations, breathing calmly and grounding themselves.

Source: Author's notes – Synthesized from personal training experience and adapted from unpublished community course materials and internal documentation.

### 3. Whose Shoe is this?

**Purpose:** This activity aims to foster empathy and imagination, to challenge and reflect on personal assumptions and stereotypes.

**Main Theme:** Communication & Dialogue

**Secondary Theme:** Awareness & Presence

**Duration:** 30 minutes

**Materials:** Participants' shoes, Blanket or large fabric on which to place shoes



**Description/Instructions:** Each participant chooses a shoe that does not belong to them (previously placed in the middle of the room by participants). Once participants have selected a shoe, they sit quietly and explore the shoe mindfully using all their senses—sight, touch, smell—to form a vivid impression. Participants then imagine the shoe's owner: their personality, life circumstances, desires, and challenges. In pairs, participants share their observations, starting sentences with:

- *"The obvious thing about this shoe is..."*
- *"My fantasy about the owner of this shoe is..."*
- The facilitator then leads the group in a reflection about assumptions, and the potential accuracy or inaccuracy of participants' imaginations.

Source: Author's notes – Synthesized from personal training experience and adapted from unpublished community course materials and internal documentation.

### 4. Back-to-Back

**Purpose:** This activity helps to develop body awareness, trust, and recognition of boundaries.

**Main Theme:** Boundaries & Consent

**Secondary Theme:** Embodiment & Movement

**Duration:** 10 minutes



**Description/Instructions:** Participants pair up (ideally with people of similar height) and stand back-to-back, eyes closed, paying close attention to physical sensations, weight, balance, and the contact boundary between themselves and their partner. The invitation is for each participant to snap their fingers every time the focus on the physical sensations is lost (usually because they go to "their heads" and focus on thoughts, worries, etc.). Participants can explore shifting weight, pressure, and subtle movements together. End with brief verbal reflection on the experience of participants.

Source: Author's notes – Synthesized from personal training experience and adapted from unpublished community course materials and internal documentation.

## 5. If I Were Brave Enough

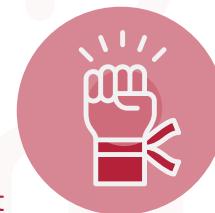
**Purpose:** This activity gives participants a direct taste of courageous communication—speaking the first, honest impulse without softening, explaining, or analyzing. It aims to heighten awareness of the emotional and bodily sensations that accompany both speaking and listening.

**Main Theme:** Communication & Dialogue

**Secondary Themes:** Awareness & Presence, Emotional Intelligence

**Duration:** 20-30 min

**Materials:** Write the three sentence-stems on a flipchart or slide so that everyone can glance at them (optional).



### ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Ground & Orient	2 min	Invite everyone to stand, close eyes, feel feet on the floor, notice breath. Briefly frame the exercise: “You’ll practice speaking the thing that arises when you are brave—without commentary, apology, or explanation. When listening, just receive.”

2. Free Walking	1 min	Participants begin to stroll randomly in the space, staying present to sights, sounds, and inner sensations.
3. Pair & Share (Round 1)	4 min total (2 min each)	On a signal, each person stops near someone, makes gentle eye contact, and silently senses “What am I feeling right now?” Partner A completes the stem “If I were brave enough, I would ask you …” in a single breath. Partner B simply receives—no nods, no verbal response, just presence. Switch roles.
4. Solo Check-in & Walk	1 min	Both partners thank one another with a nod, pause to feel any emotion or body sensation stirred, then start walking again.
5. Pair & Share (Round 2)	4 min	Form new pairs. This time use “What I really want to know about you is …”—same structure: A speaks once, B listens; then switch.
6. Solo Check-in & Walk	1 min	Repeat the self-scan while moving.
7. Pair & Share (Round 3)	4 min	Final pairing with “The vibe I get from you is …”—again, speak once, listen once, no discussion.

## 8. Whole-Group Debrief

5 – 8 min

Gather in a circle. Possible prompts:

- How did it feel to speak a brave impulse without explaining?
- What emotions or body sensations surfaced while listening in silence?
- Where might courageous, one-breath honesty serve your team or organisation?

### FACILITATOR NOTES & VARIATIONS

- **Safety first:** Remind participants they may pass or modify a stem if it feels unsafe.
- **Online adaptation:** Use breakout rooms; post stems in chat; replace “walking” with “stretch or gaze around your room.”
- **Speed or depth:** With limited time, choose only one or two stems; with more time, add journaling between rounds.
- **Link to theory:** After debriefing, map the experiences onto Gestalt concepts—contact, awareness, and the edge between impulse and withdrawal.

Source: Author's notes – Synthesized from personal training experience and adapted from unpublished community course materials and internal documentation

Note: In ANNEX ONE you will find further ideas for sentence stems grouped by the kind of contact they invite

## 6. Creative Adjustment with Conflict



**Purpose:** This activity is a chance for participants to externalize real conflicts, explore the Victim–Rescuer–Persecutor roles somatically, and discover a creative adjustment—a fresh, embodied action that shifts the stuck pattern.

**Main theme:** Conflict Transformation & Difficult Conversations

**Secondary themes:** Emotional Intelligence & Expression

**Duration:** ≈ 60 minutes

**Materials:** Flipchart or slide with the sequence to help participants track the steps (optional)

### Participant preparation (5 min)

Participants write down two conflict scenes – no one else to read them unless invited. The scenes should be as follows

(1) an experience of a group conflict (a tension they have experienced or witnessed within this training group or as part of another team). (2) A personal conflict (a live, unresolved tension from their own life)

Briefly review consent with participants – around touch and positioning. Emphasize “ask before you move or place someone.”

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	INSTRUCTIONS
1. Form Trios & Choose a Scene	3 min	Participants form trios (A, B, C). Person A chooses one of their written conflict scenes to explore first.
2. Sculpt the Conflict (Living Statue)	2 min	A silently positions B's body to portray the essential posture, distance, facial expression of the figure (s) they are in conflict with. (B cooperates like clay.)
3. A's First Action	1 min	A steps back, then enacts the gesture/movement that their role (Victim, Rescuer, Persecutor) wants to make toward B. Keep it simple and physical—no words.
4. Role-Switch with C	3 min	A steps out. C takes A's exact spot and repeats A's action toward B once. C then pauses, senses their own impulse, and lets their body continue—whatever movement, distance, or posture feels true in that moment.
5. A Integrates C's Impulse	2 min	A returns, repeats C's emergent action toward B, breathing and noticing what shifts inside.

6. Creative Adjustment	2 min	Staying with sensation, A now improvises a new action that wants to happen. This is the creative adjustment—something neither defensive nor habitual. Freeze the tableau for a few seconds so A can “breathe it in.”
7. Quick Debrief in Tri	2 min	A shares: What changed in me? What might this suggest for real-life action? B and C briefly share body sensations or emotions they noticed (no advice).
8. Rotate Roles	18 min	Repeat Steps 2-7 so each member (B, then C) gets to be Sculptor (A).
9. Whole-Group Reflection	10 min	In a circle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did the role-switch with C illuminate new possibilities?</li> <li>• What did a “creative adjustment” feel like somatically?</li> <li>• How could you test one small action from today in the actual conflict?</li> </ul>
10. Closure	2 min	Invite one grounding breath, shake out. Suggest jotting a next concrete step before leaving the room.

## FACILITATOR TIPS &amp; VARIATIONS

- **Safety:** If a posture feels triggering, participants may alter it or observe instead of embodying.
- **Language vs. body:** Keep the focus on movement; words to be added only after the physical exploration.
- **Alternative roles:** If the conflict isn't about individuals per say, A can name the figures more generically (e.g., Me, Other, System).
- **Online adaptation:** Use screen positioning; A instructs B's pose, then C turns camera off/on to switch roles, etc.

Source: Developed from classic Gestalt “living sculpture” work and the Karpman Drama Triangle; expanded with role-switching for creative adjustment.

## YOUR NOTES

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## 7. Observing the Obvious



**Purpose:** This activity aims to sharpen “external-zone” awareness—describing what is plainly visible without evaluation, story, or praise—and to allow participants to experience the difference between observation and interpretation.

**Main theme:** Awareness & Presence

**Secondary themes:** Communication & Dialogue · Boundaries & Consent

**Duration:** 20 – 25 minutes

**Materials:** Flipchart or slide listing the guidelines for “external-zone” description (optional)

## ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Set-up	3 min	Ask participants to form two concentric circles. Inner circle faces outward; outer circle faces inward, so each person has a partner.

<b>2. Frame the Practice</b>	2 min	Explain “external-zone” noticing only what the eyes can verify—shape, colour, position, posture, objects. No adjectives that imply evaluation (“elegant,” “scruffy”) and no guesses about meaning (“tired,” “friendly”). Examples: “Your shirt is blue,” “Your left foot is angled outward,” “There are three small rings in your ear.”
<b>3. Round 1 – Outer Describes, Inner Listens</b>	2 min	Outer-circle partners spend one minute naming obvious details about the person in front of them. Inner partner simply receives, maintaining neutral eye contact, no verbal response.
<b>4. Rotate &amp; Repeat</b>	4 min	Outer circle steps one person to the right; new pair. Outer again describes while inner listens (1 min). Repeat a second rotation so the outer person practices with three different partners total.
<b>5. Swap Roles</b>	1 min	Inner and outer circles switch places. Brief reminder of guidelines.
<b>6. Round 2 – New Outer Describes</b>	6 min	Repeat three rotations exactly as before, so every participant now experiences both describing and receiving.

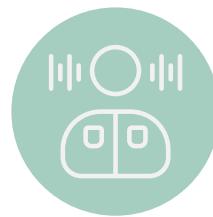
<b>7. Whole-Group Debrief</b>	5 min	Questions to invite: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did you notice about your mind while trying to stick to the obvious?</li> <li>• How did it feel to be described without interpretation?</li> <li>• Where in daily life could “just-the-facts” observation be useful?</li> </ul>
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#### FACILITATOR NOTES & VARIATIONS

- **Safety cue:** Participants may pass on any detail they prefer not to have named (e.g., scars, assistive devices).
- **Deepening:** After mastering external observation, add a second round where partners first state an obvious fact and then silently notice any judgements that pop up—naming them afterward in the debrief.
- **Written option:** Instead of speaking, observers jot observations on sticky notes, then hand them over at the end.
- **Online adaptation:** Use breakout rooms of two; observers verbalize or post observations in chat.

Source: Inspired by classic Gestalt “external zone” awareness drills (e.g., Stevens, Awareness: Exploring, Experimenting, Experiencing).

## 8. Resonant Listening



**Purpose:** This activity aims to cultivate three-level awareness while listening (1) the speaker's words, (2) one's own inner resonances (thoughts, emotions, body sensations), and (3) the relational field between speaker and listener—thereby deepening empathy and sharpening self-knowledge.

**Main theme:** Communication & Dialogue

**Secondary themes:** Emotional Intelligence & Expression · Awareness & Presence

**Duration:** ≈ 60 minutes

**Materials:** Pen and paper for every participant (or digital notes).

### ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Frame & Brief Demo	8 min	<p>Explain the Reception ☐ Resonance ☐ Response model:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reception = taking in the speaker's words.</li> <li>• Resonance = noticing what stirs inside you—images, feelings, body sensations.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response = choosing what (if anything) to say or do after sensing the resonance..</li> </ul> <p>Demonstrate with a volunteer 2-minute story while you narrate your silent inner notes</p>
2. Form Trios & Assign Roles	2 min	<p>In each trio: A = Speaker, B = Listener, C = Observer. They will rotate through all three roles.</p>
3. Round 1 (A Speaker, B Listener, C Observer)	10 min total	<p>Speaker (A) shares a meaningful experience (work, family, training) for up to 4 minutes.</p> <p>Listener (B) stays silent, tracks internal cognitive, emotional, and somatic responses, jotting brief keywords (e.g., tight chest, image of storm, urge to advise).</p> <p>Observer (C) notes visible cues—posture shifts, facial micro-expressions, moments of contact or withdrawal.</p>

		After 4 min story + 1 min silent pause, Listener offers a brief resonance report (≈1 min): "While hearing you I noticed...". No fixing or judging. Speaker simply receives; no discussion yet.		Map findings to Gestalt ideas of contact boundary and self-support.
4. Quick Debrief in Trio	1 min	Each person notes an insight or surprise.	7. Integration & Closure	4 min
5. Rotate Roles	20 min	Repeat the full process twice so everyone serves in each role. Keep the same timing.		Invite participants to write one concrete listening intention for the coming week. End with a grounding breath.
6. Whole-Group Reflection	15 min	<p>Suggested prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listeners: What patterns did you notice in your resonances (body vs. thoughts)?</li> <li>• Speakers: How did it feel to receive a resonance report rather than advice?</li> <li>• Observers: What non-verbal markers signalled resonance moments?</li> </ul>		<p><b>FACILITATOR NOTES &amp; VARIATIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Emphasize confidentiality</b>—personal stories stay in the room.</li> <li>• <b>Depth vs. safety:</b> If the group is new, limit stories to mild intensity; advanced groups may work with charged material.</li> <li>• <b>Silent response option:</b> Listeners who prefer can draw their resonance on a sticky note and hand it over.</li> <li>• <b>Online adaptation:</b> Use breakout rooms; Observer screenshots non-verbal cues (with consent).</li> <li>• <b>Extended practice:</b> Add a fourth step where Listener asks one clarifying question that emerges after sharing resonance—notice how the quality of question changes.</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from Actividades Sup1.docx—“Modelo Recepción-Resonancia-Respuesta,” enriched with Gestalt awareness practices.



## 9. Mirroring Movement

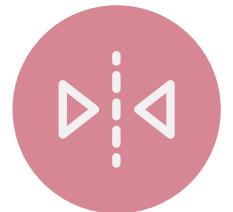
**Purpose:** This activity strengthens non-verbal attunement, empathy, and moment-to-moment awareness by inviting tracking and mirroring of another person's subtle movements and rhythms.

**Main theme:** Communication & Dialogue

**Secondary theme:** Embodiment & Movement

**Duration:** ≈ 15 minutes

**Materials:** Soft instrumental music at low volume to support focus (optional)



### ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Pair & Prepare	2 min	Invite participants to find a partner and stand facing each other at a comfortable distance. Establish soft eye contact; include wheelchair users or seated participants by matching heights when possible.

2. Round 1 – Lead/Follow	3 min	Partner A begins very slowly moving any body parts—hands, shoulders, head, torso—while Partner B mirrors as precisely as possible. Emphasize tempo over amplitude: micro-movements count. Maintain eye contact.
3. Switch Roles	3 min	Partner B now leads while Partner A mirrors, keeping the same deliberate pace and attentive gaze.
4. Round 2 – Fluid Co-Leadership	3 min	Both partners release the explicit leader/follower roles and allow leadership to pass back and forth organically. Notice tiny cues—breath shifts, eyebrow lifts—and let the “movement-dialogue” emerge.
5. Silent Reflection	1 min	Partners pause, close or soften eyes, and sense internal responses: What emotions, sensations, or thoughts are present?
6. Verbal Debrief in Pairs	2 min	Share briefly: “When I led I felt... / When I followed I noticed... / During co-leadership I experienced....” Aim for concise, first-person statements.

## 7. Whole-Group Harvest

1 min

In a circle, invite two or three quick check-ins about surprises or insights. Link back to how non-verbal attunement can inform dialogue and conflict work.

### FACILITATOR NOTES & VARIATIONS

- Pace is key:** If pairs speed up, remind them to slow to half-speed and exaggerate smooth transitions.
- Alternative focus:** Try a round with NO eye contact—mirroring from peripheral vision—to deepen bodily awareness.
- Seated adaptation:** Partners in chairs can mirror only upper-body gestures; the principle remains the same.
- Group version:** Form two lines; the front line leads while the back line mirrors, then swap.
- Online version:** Use gallery view; partners pin each other's video and mirror within camera frames.

Source: Commonly used in dance-movement therapy, improvisational theatre, and Gestalt training; this version adapted for Gestalt communication practice.

## 10. Awareness Walk



**Purpose:** This activity anchors participants in the here-and-now by heightening sensory perception of the natural environment and their own bodily presence, kindling a felt sense of ecological connection and responsibility.

**Main theme:** Awareness & Presence

**Secondary theme:** Embodiment & Movement

**Duration:** ≈ 20 minutes

**Materials:** Access to a safe outdoor route (garden, park, campus walkway)

**Optional:** small notebooks or phones for jotting impressions; a timer

### ACTIVITY FLOW

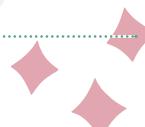
PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Arrive & Orient	2 min	Gather at the starting point. Invite a moment of stillness: feet on ground, notice breath, note weather sensations (temperature, wind, scent). Frame the walk as "collecting raw sense-data—no analysis, no photos, just experience."

<b>2. Sensory Priming</b>	2 min	Offer three cues, one at a time, with a breath between: Sight – colours, shapes, movement · Sound – nearest and farthest layers · Touch – air on skin, ground under feet or wheels.
<b>3. Silent Walk</b>	10 min	Begin a slow, silent walk (single file or scattered, 1–2 m spacing). Midway, signal a pause (raise hand or ring a bell) and invite tuning into two subtler senses—smell and internal proprioception (weight, muscle tone). Resume walking. Emphasize staying below normal speed; wheel-users adjust pace to maintain presence.
<b>4. Closing the Loop</b>	2 min	Return to the starting spot. Participants close eyes, take one breath, and notice any shift in body or mood compared to the outset.
<b>5. Group Harvest</b>	4 min	Form a circle. Each person offers one concise observation, beginning with “I noticed...”. Encourage concrete sensory language (“a mossy-metallic smell,” “sun flicker through oak leaves”) rather than interpretations (“it felt magical”). Optional: jot impressions first, then share.

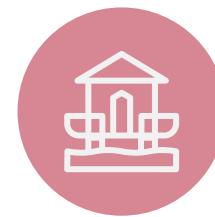
### FACILITATOR NOTES & VARIATIONS

- **Safety first:** Brief the route, mention uneven ground, keep group within sight. Have an indoor contingency (slow sensory walk along hallways, noticing textures and sounds).
- **Deepening Ecological Tie-in:** After sharing, pose: “How did this micro-awareness shift your sense of connection to the ecosystem that supports us?” Optionally link to sustainable action brainstorm.
- **Accessibility tweaks:** For low-vision participants, pair them with a buddy describing colours/textures aloud in whispers; deaf participants focus on visual and tactile cues.
- **Weather lens:** Rain or wind amplifies tactile and auditory input—embrace it if conditions are safe.
- **Extended version:** Add a second loop where participants intentionally alter one variable—e.g., slower pace, closed eyes for a few steps, barefoot on grass—to compare sensory impact.

Source: Draw from classic Gestalt “external-zone” awareness walks (Stevens, Awareness: Exploring, Experimenting, Experiencing) and eco-somatic practices adapted for organisational learning.



## 11. Fantasy Journey: The Cabin



**Purpose:** This activity uses guided imagination as a mirror for current inner processes, helping participants harvest symbolic material (images, sensations, emotions) that can be explored and integrated into personal growth work.

**Main theme:** Reflection & Integration

**Secondary themes:** Emotional Intelligence & Expression · Awareness & Presence

**Duration:** ≈ 30 minutes

15 min guided imagery · 10 min paired sharing · 5 min plenary harvest

**Materials:**

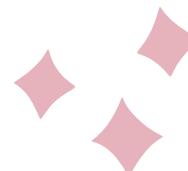
- Printed or digital copy of the visualization outline (adapted from Ángeles Martín, Manual Práctico de Psicoterapia Gestalt, pp. 152–154).
- Comfortable seating or mats; optional soft music and low lighting.
- Paper and pens for jotting images afterward.



## ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Set the Frame	2 min	Explain that the journey is symbolic, not predictive: "Images that emerge are invitations to self-inquiry." Encourage comfortable posture, eyes closed or softly unfocused.
2. Ground & Relax	3 min	Lead a brief body scan: feel feet, legs, torso, shoulders, jaw; slow the breath.
3. Guided Visualization	12 min	<p>Use a calm voice and deliberate pauses. The classic arc (paraphrased from Martín):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Pathway:</b> Participants imagine walking along a natural trail—notice terrain, sounds, temperature.</li> <li><b>Approach:</b> A clearing appears with an isolated wooden cabin; observe feelings that arise.</li> <li><b>Threshold:</b> At the door—touch the wood, decide whether to enter; note any hesitation or eagerness.</li> <li><b>Interior Exploration:</b> Move room to room, noticing objects, furniture, light, smells. Which items attract or repel? Any living beings present?</li> </ol>

		<p>5. <b>Symbolic Encounter:</b> A particular object or corner calls for attention—linger, sense its personal significance.</p> <p>6. <b>Message or Gift:</b> Participants may receive a word, gesture, or gift from the object/space.</p> <p>7. <b>Departure:</b> Thank the cabin, exit, walk back along the path, gradually return awareness to the room.</p>
<b>4. Solo Integration</b>	3 min	Eyes still closed, invite a deep breath and ask: <i>“Hold one image or feeling that seems most alive.”</i> Then slowly open eyes and write or sketch key symbols.
<b>5. Pair Sharing</b>	10 min	In twos, each person has 4 min to describe their journey, focusing on sense data and feelings before interpreting. Listener reflects back one element they found vivid—no analysis, no advice.
<b>6. Whole-Group Harvest</b>	5 min	Gather in circle. Volunteers name in one sentence a symbol that surprised them and the emotion linked to it. Optionally connect to current life themes.



## FACILITATOR NOTES &amp; VARIATIONS

- **Safety:** Offer the choice to pause or open eyes at any point; remind participants they are in control of the image.
- **Depth Check:** If intense material surfaces, suggest grounding (feet on floor, open eyes, orient to the room) and follow-up support.
- **Thematic Inquiry:** After sharing, you may map cabin elements onto Gestalt Cycle stages (e.g., unfinished business = cluttered corner).
- **Artistic Integration:** Provide coloured pencils for drawing the cabin scene; use art pieces in later sessions.
- **Online Adaptation:** Ask participants to mute mics, dim lights, and keep cameras on if comfortable; share reflections in breakout pairs.
- **Eco-Somatic Link:** Frame the cabin as a metaphor for the “inner ecological home,” paving the way for sustainability discussions.

Source: Visualization arc inspired by Ángeles Martín, Manual Práctico de Psicoterapia Gestalt (pp.152-154)

YOUR NOTES

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## 12. Yes/No Boundary Exercise



**Purpose:** This activity gives participants an embodied experience of setting and respecting boundaries, strengthening clarity, integrity, and mutual respect in everyday interactions.

**Main theme:** Boundaries & Consent

**Secondary themes:** Emotional Intelligence & Expression

**Duration:** ≈ 20 minutes

**Materials:** Floor tape to mark a “boundary line”; flipchart with the four practice steps (optional).

### ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Context & Safety Contract	2 min	Frame the exercise: “We will practice saying and hearing Yes and No—verbally and with the body. Any one may opt out at any moment.” Review consent signals (e.g., raised hand = pause).
2. Centring	1 min	Invite a brief body scan: feet on floor, breath in belly, notice any existing Yes / No sensations.

3. Round A – Verbal Only	4 min	Form pairs. Partner 1 asks a neutral request (e.g., “Will you hand me an invisible ball?”). Partner 2 responds clearly with either “Yes” or “No,” matching voice volume to the clarity of their choice while keeping body still. Partners pause and sense internal reactions; switch roles. Repeat 3–4 times, varying requests.
4. Round B – Verbal + Body	4 min	Same structure, but responders now let the body align with the word: step forward/open chest for “Yes,” step back/turn slightly away for “No” (or any authentic gesture). Notice congruence or mismatch.
5. Round C – Body Only	4 min	No words: Partners pose the request silently by extending a hand. Responders answer solely with posture, gaze, distance. After each exchange, ask: “Could you feel the answer without words?” Swap roles.
6. Solo Reflection	1 min	Partners step apart, close eyes, and sense: <i>Which response felt easier? Harder? Where in my body did I feel it?</i>

## 7. Whole-Group Debrief

4 min

Suggested prompts:

- What surprised you about expressing or hearing “No”?
- Did your body ever say something different than your mouth?
- How might clearer Yes/No signals improve group trust?

### FACILITATOR NOTES & VARIATIONS

- **Ladder of intensity:** Start with trivial requests; advanced groups can progress to mildly meaningful asks (e.g., “May I borrow your notebook?”).
- **Boundary line:** Place a tape line; responders step across (Yes) or stay behind (No) to make spatial consent visible.
- **Cultural nuance:** Acknowledge that direct “No” may feel taboo in some cultures; invite participants to experiment anyway and notice sensations.
- **Integration link:** Map the experience onto the Gestalt cycle—awareness > choice > action > contact > withdrawal. Where did interruptions arise?
- **Online adaptation:** Use cameras: thumbs-up/thumbs-down for body cues; maintain pauses for somatic noticing.

Source: Drawn from classic Gestalt boundary-setting drills and contemporary consent education practices.

## 13. Statue of Myself



**Purpose:** This activity offers a present-moment emotional experience into a fully embodied shape, making inner states visible, tangible, and available for self-reflection and empathic witnessing.

**Main theme:** Embodiment & Movement

**Secondary theme:** Emotional Intelligence & Expression

**Duration:** ≈ 15 minutes

**Materials:** Soft instrumental music and dimmed lights to support inward focus (optional).

### ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Arrival & Inner Scan	2 min	Invite participants to stand or sit comfortably, eyes closed. Guide a quick body-scan: “Notice any sensation, temperature, tightness, or movement inside you. Let an emotion or mood word surface—no need to label it yet.”
2. Form the Statue	2 min	Keeping eyes closed (or softly open), each person slowly lets their body arrange itself into a statue that captures the felt

		emotion—consider posture, weight distribution, head angle, gaze, hand shape, breath rhythm. Emphasize authenticity over drama. Freeze when the shape feels “right enough.”
<b>3. Gallery Walk</b>	3 min	Ask everyone to open eyes while maintaining the statue. Participants silently look around the room, noticing others’ forms without comment or interpretation—just receiving visual information.
<b>4. Micro-Movements &amp; Adjustment</b>	1 min	Give permission to tweak the statue 5 %—a tiny shift that makes the emotion even clearer or more honest. Hold the new pose for three slow breaths.
<b>5. Release &amp; Shake-out</b>	1 min	On a signal, everyone exhales, shakes limbs gently, and returns to neutral stance.
<b>6. Pair Reflection</b>	4 min	In pairs, Partner A describes their internal sensations while holding the statue (no story, just body/emotion data). Partner B mirrors back one element they observed (“I saw your shoulders lift toward your ears”). Switch roles after two minutes.

**7. Whole-Group Harvest**

2 min

In circle, volunteers finish the sentence: “When I embodied my feeling, I learned ...”. Highlight the link between felt sense & expressive action & increased self-awareness.

**FACILITATOR NOTES & VARIATIONS**

**Safety signal:** Participants may keep eyes open or choose a seated statue; remind them they control intensity.

**Invisible Observer variant:** Add a silent witness who later shares what emotions they sensed in the room, enriching empathy.

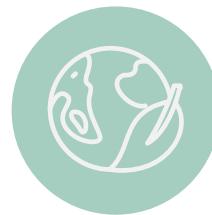
**From Static to Dynamic:** After static phase, allow statues to evolve for 10 seconds into whatever movement wants to emerge—observe how emotion transforms in motion.

**Integration link:** Map the experience onto the Gestalt Cycle—statue captures contact; release embodies withdrawal and integration.

**Online adaptation:** Ask participants to angle cameras to show torso; gallery view becomes the “exhibit.” Encourage self-touch (hand on chest, etc.) if space is limited.

Source: Adapted from the “Clay Statue” exercise in IO2 EduGestalt Manual, p. 123, with emphasis on present-moment emotional awareness.

## 14. Listening to the Environment



**Purpose:** This activity is designed to deepen ecological awareness through attunement to the acoustic landscape, and the practice mindfulness of attention—tracking when the mind wanders and gently guiding it back to present-moment sensory experience.

**Main theme:** Awareness and Presence

**Secondary theme:** Embodiment and Movement

**Duration:** ≈ 15 minutes

### Materials:

- A safe outdoor area (garden, courtyard, park edge, even an open window if weather or mobility requires)
- Optional: notepad and pen for brief jotting after the sit

## ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Arrival & Intention	2 min	Gather at the chosen spot. Invite participants to sit or stand comfortably, eyes closed or softly downcast. Frame the exercise: "We'll simply listen. When (not if) your attention drifts, notice

the wandering and escort it back to sound without judging yourself."		
2. Grounding the Senses	1 min	Prompt three anchors: feel contact with ground/chair, notice breath in nostrils, sense ambient temperature on skin.
3. Silent Listening Sit	8 min	Begin the quiet period. Offer two whispered cues at minutes 3 and 6: "Notice layers—nearest sounds, mid-range, farthest" and later "Notice the moment awareness leaves sound; label it 'wandering' and return." Otherwise remain silent.
4. Gently Transition Out	1 min	Ring a soft bell or say, "Let the next sound you hear be my voice." Invite one deep breath and slow eye opening.
5. Solo Reflection	1 min	Participants jot or silently note: One sound I recall + one moment my mind wandered.
6. Pair or Small-Group Sharing	2 min	Briefly exchange: "The most vivid sound was... / I noticed my mind drift when..." Emphasize concise statements; no analysis of each other.

### 7. Whole-Group Harvest

1 min

In plenary, ask for a few one-sentence insights: "How did attending to the environment affect your sense of connection or respect for it?" Close with an appreciative breath toward the surroundings.

#### FACILITATOR NOTES & VARIATIONS

- Wandering is the teacher:** Normalise that attention will roam; the "return" is the muscle-building moment.
- Accessibility:** Offer seated options; for hearing-impaired participants, broaden to tactile and visual cues—wind on skin, shifting light, movement of leaves.
- Weather wisdom:** Light drizzle or wind can enrich the soundscape; if conditions are harsh, use an indoor space with an open window.
- Extended practice:** For a 30-minute version, alternate 5-minute sits with 1-minute mindful walking, tracking sound-change with each location.
- Integration link:** Encourage participants to adopt a two-minute "sound check-in" during work breaks to sustain ecological mindfulness.

Source: Inspired by eco-somatic listening practices common in Gestalt and mindfulness traditions; adapted here for organisational training contexts.

## 15. Blind-Trust Walk



**Purpose:** This activity is designed to heighten non-visual senses, engender interpersonal trust, and notice how heavily we lean on sight for orientation and cognition.

**Main theme:** Boundaries & Consent

**Secondary themes:** Awareness & Presence · Embodiment & Movement

**Duration:** ≈ 25 minutes

5 min briefing · 14 min walking in two rounds · 6 min debrief  
Length can be longer depending how challenging you would like the activity to be.

#### Materials:

- One comfortable blindfold (or scarf) per pair
- A safe, obstacle-free outdoor route with a variety of textures, scents, and ambient sounds

#### ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Safety & Consent Briefing	3 min	Explain goals and three consent rules: (1) Blindfolded partner may stop at any time. (2) Guide asks before physical contact beyond a light elbow or

		shoulder touch. (3) Use an agreed “Pause/Stop” word. Clarify route and potential hazards.
<b>2. Pair &amp; Prepare</b>	2 min	Partners decide who will be Explorer A (blindfold first) and Guide B. Guide gently places blindfold, checks comfort, then invites Explorer to take first step only when ready.
<b>3. Round 1 – Outdoor Trust Walk</b>	7 min	Guide leads Explorer at a slow pace for ~25–30 meters, pausing at three “micro-stations”—e.g., tree bark to feel, herb to smell, warm sun patch to sense. At each stop the Guide says, <i>“Would you like to explore this texture/scent?”</i> If Explorer agrees, Guide assists hand-or-nose placement. Between stations invite Explorer to attend to ambient sounds, ground texture, breeze.
<b>4. Switch Roles</b>	1 min	Return to start point (or continue loop). Swap blindfold; repeat with new Guide and Explorer.

<b>5. Round 2 – Second Trust Walk</b>	7 min	Same structure, different route segment or sensory stops so experience is fresh.
<b>6. Solo Grounding</b>	1 min	Partners stand side-by-side, eyes open, feel feet on earth, notice inner state.
<b>7. Whole-Group Debrief</b>	5 min	<p>Suggested prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explorers: What felt easiest to trust? Hardest?</li> <li>Guides: How did you balance safety and autonomy?</li> <li>All: Which non-visual sense became most vivid? How did absence of sight affect thinking? Link insights to workplace or learning contexts where unseen factors require trust.</li> </ul>



## FACILITATOR NOTES &amp; VARIATIONS

- **Route checks:** Ensure no sharp branches, steep drops, traffic, or allergens. Have a spare staff member posted along the path for support.
- **Layered consent:** Guides can verbalize options (“Would you like my arm for this step?”) to reinforce choice.
- **Cognition reflection:** After debriefing, ask how lack of visual data changed internal dialogue—slower thoughts, heightened imagery, etc.
- **Wheelchair-accessible adaptation:** Guide pushes chair only with permission; include tactile stops reachable by hand.
- **Indoor rain plan:** Use corridors and varied interior surfaces (cool window glass, rough brick, scented herb bundle).

Source: Author's notes – Synthesized from personal training experience and adapted from unpublished community course materials and internal documentation.

YOUR NOTES .....

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## 16. Blind Exploration



**Purpose:** This activity cultivates felt trust, explicit consent, and refined tactile perception by guiding a blind-folded partner through a short sensory journey with everyday objects.

**Main theme:** Boundaries & Consent

**Secondary theme:** Awareness & Presence

**Duration:** ≈ 20 minutes

**Materials:**

- One soft, clean blindfold (or scarf) per pair
- 5-8 safe, varied objects placed on a low table or cloth (e.g., pine-cone, spoon, silk scarf, stone, small toy)
- Optional bell or chime to signal transitions

## ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Safety & Consent Briefing	3 min	Frame the exercise: “Your partner’s ‘Yes’ is required for every step—placing the blindfold, touching objects, even adjusting pace. The blindfolded person may halt or remove the cloth at any time.” Agree on a pause word (e.g., “Stop”).

<b>2. Pair &amp; Prepare</b>	1 min	Partners decide who is Explorer A (blindfold first) and Guide B. B checks A's comfort before gently applying the blindfold.
<b>3. Round 1—Guided Tactile Tour</b>	4 min	Guide B offers one object at a time into A's hands. B may ask open prompts: "Notice temperature... weight... edges. Anything surprising?" No naming the object yet. After each item, A sets it down; B announces when the next item is coming.
<b>4. Mini-Reflection in Pair</b>	1 min	Blindfold stays on; A says a few words about bodily or emotional sensations, not guesses. B listens.
<b>5. Switch Roles</b>	1 min	Remove blindfold, swap roles; repeat Round 1 with new Guide and Explorer.
<b>6. Solo Grounding</b>	1 min	Everyone takes a breath, feels feet, notices any lingering tingles in hands.

<b>7. Whole-Group Debrief</b>	6 min	In circle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explorers: What helped you trust? What boundary signals arose?</li> <li>Guides: How did it feel to pace and check consent?</li> <li>Connect insights to real-life negotiations of touch, help, or information.</li> </ul>
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#### FACILITATOR NOTES & VARIATIONS

- Object care:** Avoid allergens (e.g., scented flowers) and sharp edges. Wipe items before use.
- Layered consent:** Guides can ask, "Would you like to explore more, or switch?" reinforcing choice.
- Low-vision adaptation:** Make roles voluntary—participants with existing visual impairment decide whether to guide or explore.
- Movement variant:** Instead of objects, Guide leads blindfolded partner around a room with varied textures (rug edge, wall, chair back), announcing each boundary.
- Link to theory:** After the debrief, map to Gestalt's contact boundary—where self meets other—and how clear "Yes/No" supports creative adjustment.

## 17. Emotional Rooms



**Purpose:** This activity gives participants the opportunity to embody, express, and move among six core emotions—anger, fear, sadness, joy, pain, and love—and to study the boundary where one feeling ends and the next begins. The practice develops nuanced emotional literacy, self-regulation, and respect for others' inner landscapes.

**Main theme:** Emotional Intelligence & Expression

**Secondary themes:** Embodiment & Movement · Awareness & Presence · Boundaries & Consent

**Duration:** ≈ 60 minutes (10 min set-up & framing · 30 min free exploration · 15 min small-group harvest · 5 min plenary close)

**Materials:**

For the space:

- Floor tape to mark six large “rooms” (2 rows × 3 columns, ~3 × 3 m each)
- Adjacent Decompression Zone (chairs, water, blankets)

For participants:

- A4 paper, sticky notes, large poster sheets
- Markers, crayons, oil pastels
- Pillows, soft toys, scrap fabric—for tactile comfort or release

**Optional extras:** battery speaker with low-volume instrumental loops corresponding to each room (e.g., soft drum for anger, lullaby for love).

## ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Framing & Safety Contract	5 min	Introduce goals and rules: self-responsibility, confidentiality, “full permission to step out to the Decompression Zone at any moment.” Point out water, tissues, and the STOP hand signal if anyone needs the facilitator.
2. Mapping the Rooms	5 min	Walk the group around the taped rectangle. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Row 1: Anger · Fear · Sadness</li> <li>• Row 2: Joy · Pain · Love</li> </ul> Invite them to notice their bodily response to each label.
3. Individual Free Exploration	30 min total	Participants enter any room, one at a time or in small clumps, and recall a biographical scene that evokes the room’s emotion. They may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move, posture, vocalize (tone only, no words)</li> <li>• Draw symbols, words, or scribbles on paper stuck to the floor or walls</li> <li>• Hug a pillow, tear scrap paper, dance—whatever feels authentic and safe.</li> </ul>

		<p>Transition practice: As they sense a shift, they pause at the tape line, name (internally) the emotion they are leaving, breathe once, then cross into the next room.</p> <p>Participants can step into the Decompression Zone at any point to journal, sip water, or simply rest.</p>
<b>4. Small-Group Harvest (trios or groups of four)</b>	15 min	<p>In the Decompression Zone, form groups. Each person shares:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. One insight about a boundary moment between two emotions.</li> <li>2. A body sensation that signaled an approaching shift.</li> </ol> <p>Listeners reflect back a three-word resonance only (no advice).</p>
<b>5. Plenary Reflection &amp; Close</b>	5 min	<p>Standing circle. Prompt finishes:</p> <p><i>"A room I avoided was..."</i></p> <p><i>"Crossing a boundary taught me..."</i></p> <p>Affirm Link to Comhlámh's values: practising Respect (for each person's process) and Integrity (honest contact with our real feelings). Close with collective exhale and gentle stretch.</p>

## FACILITATOR NOTES & VARIATIONS

- **Safety staffing:** One facilitator roves, a co-facilitator watches the Decompression Zone.
- **Crowding:** Limit each room to 4 people; use a waiting edge if full.
- **Cultural tuning:** Rename Pain as Hurt or Grief if language feels softer; adapt music accordingly.
- **Written integration:** Offer an optional prompt afterward: *"Write a letter from one emotion to another."*
- **Online adaptation:** Use six breakout rooms titled with the emotions; participants bring props, move cameras to show posture, and keep one "neutral lobby" room for decompression.

Source: Author's notes – Synthesized from personal training experience and adapted from unpublished community course materials and internal documentation.

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## 18. Colombian Hypnosis



**Purpose:** This activity sharpens non-verbal communication, deepens bodily attunement, and cultivates trust and solidarity as partners (and later the whole group) move in synchrony without words.

**Main theme:** Communication & Dialogue

**Secondary theme:** Embodiment & Movement · Solidarity · Awareness & Presence

**Duration:** ≈ 20 minutes (2 min framing · 12 min practice in three rounds · 4 min debrief · 2 min close)

**Materials:** None (spacious room or open outdoor area)

### ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Frame & Safety	2 min	<p>Introduce Augusto Boal's game Colombian Hypnosis: <i>"One person silently 'hypnotizes' another by offering their open hand or focused gaze; the follower must keep nose/forehead ~15 cm from the hand or maintain eye-lock, mirroring every movement. No talking. Follower can stop at any moment."</i> Stress slow pace and gentle joints.</p>

2. Round 1 – Pairs (Hand Focus)	4 min	Form pairs. Partner A places palm ~15 cm in front of Partner B's face. A moves hand up/down, sideways, diagonally; B follows with whole body to keep the distance constant. After 2 min, switch roles.
3. Round 2 – Pairs (Eye Focus)	4 min	Same pairs. This time the gaze leads: A begins a slow walk or gentle dance while maintaining eye contact; B mirrors path and qualities. Switch roles after 2 min.
4. Round 3 – Chains & Webs	4 min	Create groups of 4–6. One leader at the front offers a hand; second person follows that hand; third follows second's hand, and so on, creating a moving chain. After 90 sec the leader steps aside and the next person becomes leader. Optionally morph into a web where several hands lead simultaneously—participants choose which to follow moment-to-moment.
5. Whole-Group Debrief	4 min	<p>Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Followers: What helped you trust the leader?</li> <li>Leaders: How did you sense the group's limits?</li> <li>All: What messages travelled through movement alone? Where might silent attunement help our teamwork?</li> </ul>

**6. Closure & Reset** 2 min

Shake out, stretch shoulders. Invite one breath together and share a silent thumbs-up to acknowledge group synchrony.

**FACILITATOR NOTES & VARIATIONS**

- **Pace reminder:** When speed creeps up, cue “half-speed.”
- **Touch-free option:** If hand-to-face distance feels intrusive, use a coloured card or baton as the focal point.
- **Accessibility:** Seated or wheelchair users can lead with hand or head; followers match from their own base.
- **Creative expansion:** End with open improvisation where anyone may become a leader for a few seconds, testing rapid leadership hand-offs.
- **Theory link:** Connect to Gestalt’s contact boundary—how subtle shifts of distance and pace affect mutual influence.

Source: Adapted from Augusto Boal, Games for Actors and Non-Actors (Routledge, 1992), exercise “Colombian Hypnosis.”

## 19. Headline: What Are You Seeking?



**Purpose:** This activity helps participants to clarify motivations and objectives for participating in the space and promotes authentic self-reflection and group sharing

**Main Theme:** Reflection & Integration

**Secondary Themes:** Awareness & Presence, Emotional Intelligence

**Duration:** 30 min

**Materials:** Paper and pens

### Description/Instructions:

In trios, participants share a newspaper-style headline summarizing their primary motivation for joining the group or activity (e.g., “Looking for Confidence,” “Searching for Community”). Each participant briefly expands on their headline, sharing openly what they bring and hope to gain. Trios discuss common themes before sharing highlights with the larger group.

Source: Author’s notes – Synthesized from personal training experience and adapted from unpublished community course materials and internal documentation.

## 20. Animal Archetypes

**Purpose:** This activity taps imagination and bodily intelligence by inviting embodiment of animals that mirror one's current inner landscape and harvesting personal insights through symbolic play and reflection.

**Main theme:** Creative Experimentation & Improvisation

**Secondary themes:** Emotional Intelligence & Expression · Embodiment & Movement

**Duration:** ≈ 40 minutes (5 min framing · 15 min solo embodiment · 15 min small-group debrief · 5 min plenary close)

### Materials:

- Spacious room cleared of obstacles
- Optional calming drum track or nature soundscape at low volume



### ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Arrival & Choice	5 min	Invite participants to stand, eyes closed, and sense: "Which animal feels most like me right now, or expresses something I need?" They silently pick one—mythic or real.

2. Solo Embodiment	8 min	Eyes still closed (or half-open), each person lets posture, breath, and micro-movements shift toward the animal. Begin with weight distribution, then spine shape, gaze, tempo. Stress gradualness and safety—no full-speed pouncing.
3. Free Roam "Jungle"	7 min	On a signal, eyes open. The room becomes a quiet jungle. Participants move freely, amplifying sounds, gestures, or interactions their creature would make—sniff, flap, slither, prowl. Maintain awareness of space and others; no spoken words.
4. Slow Return to Human	2 min	Gradually release the animal and come back to neutral stance. Feel differences in breath, mood, muscle tone.
5. Small-Group Reflection	15 min	Form groups of 3–4. Each shares: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Why this animal today?</li> <li>2. One unexpected body sensation or emotion that arose.</li> <li>3. A life situation where the animal's qualities might help. Listeners reflect back one quality they witnessed ("grounded power," "alert curiosity")—no analysis or advice.</li> </ol>

### 6. Plenary Harvest & Close

5 min

Circle up. Volunteers finish the prompt: "My animal reminded me that I can...". Link to everyday creativity and adaptive behavior. Close with collective stretch and a playful group roar, hiss, or flutter.

#### FACILITATOR NOTES & VARIATIONS

- Energy range:** If room energy spikes, cue "half-speed" or invite freezing poses every 30 seconds.
- Accessibility:** Seated or wheelchair users adapt movements (wing flaps, tail swishes) within their range; emphasize inner quality over big locomotion.
- Depth option:** Follow the session with journaling or drawing the animal in its habitat.
- Theoretical link:** Relate to Jungian archetypes and Gestalt creative adjustment—borrowing non-human forms to explore neglected aspects of self.
- Online adaptation:** Participants turn cameras to show upper-body embodiment; use gallery view as the "jungle," then share in breakout rooms.

Source: Author's notes – Synthesized from personal training experience and adapted from unpublished community course materials and internal documentation.

## 21. Emotional timeline (A.K.A. "My Emotional Autobiography")

**Purpose:** This activity offers a way for participants to map personal emotional milestones, recognise recurring patterns, and integrate life experiences into a coherent self-narrative.

**Main theme:** Reflection & Integration

**Secondary themes:** Emotional Intelligence & Expression · Awareness & Presence

**Duration:** ≈ 45 minutes (5 min framing · 15 min timeline creation · 20 min sharing in pairs/trios · 5 min plenary harvest)

#### Materials:

- A3 or legal-size sheets of paper
- Coloured markers / pens
- Optional masking tape to fix pages to tables or walls

#### ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Frame the Exercise	5 min	Explain: "We'll sketch a personal 'emotional lifeline'. You decide how far back to reach and which moments to include. Share only what feels safe." Emphasise confidentiality.

<b>2. Create the Timeline</b>	15 min	Participants draw a horizontal line across the page, marking age (or life periods) along it. They add peaks (intense joy, pride, love) above the line and valleys (grief, fear, anger, shame) below, using colours or symbols. Encourage brief labels or mini-drawings—avoid long writing to keep it visceral.
<b>3. Share in Pairs/Trios</b>	20 min	Instruct groups to decide order; speaker takes ~6 min to walk the listener(s) through their timeline, highlighting 2-3 pivotal emotions and what they learned. Listeners practice resonant listening—reflecting feelings back in one or two sentences, no advice. Swap until all have shared.
<b>4. Whole-Group Harvest</b>	5 min	Standing or seated circle. Prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>“One pattern I noticed in my timeline is ...”</li><li>“Something I’m curious to explore next is ...”</li></ul> Link insights to ongoing personal or organisational work. Close with a collective breath and invite participants to keep (or safely dispose of) their timelines.

## FACILITATOR NOTES &amp; VARIATIONS

- **Pacing tip:** Offer a halfway reminder during timeline drawing so participants leave space for later years.
- **Depth slider:** Shorten sharing time (e.g., 4 min each) for large groups or extend to 60 min total for deeper storytelling.
- **Artistic option:** Provide stickers, washi tape, or collage scraps for richer symbolism.
- **Trigger care:** Have a quiet corner available; remind participants they can skip any event or emotion.
- **Virtual adaptation:** Use a shared whiteboard tool or invite participants to draw on paper and hold up to camera during breakout-room sharing.
- **Link to Gestalt cycle:** After harvest, point to how peaks/valleys show cycles of awareness >> mobilization >> contact >> withdrawal and where unfinished business may still linger.

Source: Inspired by lifeline methods used in narrative therapy and career-coaching; adapted for Gestalt-oriented training.

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## 22. What is your Character

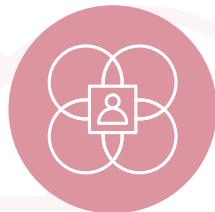
**Purpose:** This activity is designed to boost self-awareness by playfully projecting parts of the self onto a familiar fictional character, then externalizing that projection through body, movement, and voice.

**Main theme:** Creative Experimentation & Improvisation

**Secondary themes:** Communication & Dialogue · Emotional Intelligence & Expression · Embodiment & Movement

**Duration:** ≈ 30 minutes (5 min framing · 8 min dialogue in trios · 12 min character-statue work in pairs · 5 min plenary harvest)

**Materials:** None (space clear enough for paired movement)



### ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Frame & Choose a Character	5 min	Invite each participant to pick a well-known fictional character (book, film, series, myth) that “feels like me today” or that others might associate with them. Stress spontaneity—first one that pops up is fine.

**2. Dialogue in trios** 8 min

In trios, each person has ~2½ min to answer:

1. Traits I resonate with in this character...

2. How I think others see this character (and maybe me) ...

Listeners ask one clarifying question, then rotate.

**3. Pair Work – Character Statue** 12 min total

Re-form into pairs.

Round A (6 min)

- Actor sculpts their body into a statue of the character.
- Add a repetitive micro-movement (e.g., tilt of head, fist pump).
- Let the first short phrase that arises slip out vocally (no over-thinking).

• Partner Mirror copies statue, movement, and phrase three times while the Actor observes internal reactions—emotions, memories, insights.

• Briefly name aloud what surfaced (“I felt proud / silly / strong...”).

Switch roles for Round B (6 min).

#### 4. Whole-Group Harvest

5 min

Standing circle. Each person completes one of these sentences:

- *"My character teaches me ..."*
- *"When I watched my character mirrored, I realised ..."*

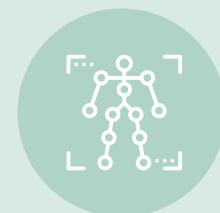
Notice common themes or surprises. Close with collective shake-out.

#### FACILITATOR NOTES & VARIATIONS

- **Character pool:** If participants draw blanks, offer a quick list (e.g., Hermione, Batman, Moana, Sherlock, Yoda).
- **Safety:** If a statue feels too revealing, allow modifying pose or choosing a new character.
- **Depth option:** After the mirror round, have Actors step back into their statue and try the Mirror's version—does it feel truer or distorted?
- **Link to theory:** Point to Gestalt's idea of projection and creative adjustment—how we borrow external images to explore inner material.
- **Online adaptation:** Use cameras; Mirroring partner repeats pose and phrase on screen. Movement limited to upper body if needed.

Source: Author's notes – Synthesized from personal training experience and adapted from unpublished community course materials and internal documentation.

## 23. Sociogram in Motion



**Purpose:** This activity makes the invisible social map of the group visible—who feels close to whom, who is perceived in certain roles—and surfaces the emotional impact of inclusion, exclusion, and perceived power.

**Main theme:** Awareness and Presence

**Secondary theme:** Boundaries & Consent

**Duration:** ≈ 30 minutes (5 min setup & safety · 12 min sociogram rounds · 8 min silent self-reflection · 5 min plenary harvest)

#### Materials:

- Large grid (flip-chart or spreadsheet projected) with participants' names down the left and statement numbers across the top;
- Markers or laptop for tallying

## ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Frame & Safety Contract	3 min	Explain: <i>"We'll map perceptions in the room. You can always pass if a prompt feels unsafe. Touch is optional—if you'd rather indicate by standing close without contact, do so."</i> Establish a STOP gesture for anyone needing an immediate pause.

<b>2. Demo &amp; Logistics</b>	2 min	Show how a participant will gently place a hand on the chosen person's shoulder/arm (or stand beside them) when the statement is read. Remind: choose only one person per prompt, no explanations during rounds.	<b>4. Silent Self-Reflection</b>	4 min	Everyone returns to seats. Invite eyes closed, sensing body: "How was it to be chosen—or not? Which prompt hit hardest? Any surprises?"
<b>3. Sociogram Rounds</b>	12 min	<p>Facilitator reads 6-8 prepared statements one at a time. After each, participants move quickly to their choice and freeze for the tally. Assistant records numbers in the grid.</p> <p>Sample statement set (edit to fit culture &amp; safety)*:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. "Who do you turn to for honest feedback?"</li> <li>2. "Who brings the most calm when things get tense?"</li> <li>3. "Whose creativity inspires you?"</li> <li>4. "Who would you trust to lead the group if the facilitators disappeared?"</li> <li>5. "Who currently challenges you to grow?"</li> <li>6. "Who would you ask to partner with on a high-stakes project?"</li> </ol> <p>Note 1: Use a high amount of prompts (15+) to give space for many interactions and to ensure that there is time for "things to happen" to people.</p> <p>Note 2: Optional higher-risk prompts ("Who do you find sexy?") only with strong consent culture and time for processing.</p>	<b>5. Grid Reveal &amp; Observation</b>	4 min	Display the tally grid. Participants simply look for a minute, noticing patterns (clusters, outliers, balance). No discussion yet.



## **FACILITATOR NOTES & VARIATIONS**

- Consent & Sensitivity Choose statements that probe relevance (commitment, support, challenge) without humiliating anyone. Offer opt-out or alternate phrasing.
- Multiple tallies If group > 25, assign two assistants to log results quickly.
- Wheelchair or mobility considerations Allow pointing or verbal naming if moving is difficult.
- Analysis option After the workshop, facilitators can anonymize and share the grid to spark ongoing dialogue about inclusion and power.
- Online version Use polling software or Zoom reactions; tally results live on a shared spreadsheet.

Source: Author's notes – Synthesized from personal training experience and adapted from unpublished community course materials and internal documentation.

Note: A 75-item prompt bank divided between low-, medium- and higher-risk is attached at the end of the document.

## 24. Metaphorical Suitcase



**Purpose:** This activity surfaces the “inner luggage” we travel with—skills, wounds, beliefs, supports—and to weave those personal resources into a shared, resonant text that mirrors the group’s collective strength.

## Main theme: Reflection & Integration

## Secondary theme: Emotional Intelligence & Expression

**Duration:** 30 – 40 minutes (5 min framing · 10 min automatic writing · 10 min poem building · 5–10 min group harvest)

## Materials:

- A4 paper (two sheets per person)
- Pens or markers
- Flip-chart or large sheet for the collective poem

## ACTIVITY FLOW

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PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
<b>1. Frame the Image</b>	2 min	<i>"Imagine you carry an invisible suitcase everywhere. Inside are resources (skills, hopes, allies) and heavier items (fears, unmet needs, 'just-in-case' defences). We'll unpack it in writing—no censoring."</i>

<b>2. Centring Prompt</b>	3 min	Eyes closed, invite three deep breaths. Whisper cues: <i>“Feel the handle in your hand... Sense its weight... Notice what’s rattling inside.”</i>
<b>3. Automatic Writing</b>	10 min	On first sheet, participants write non-stop—lists, phrases, doodles—anything that belongs in their suitcase right now. Encourage speed over grammar; no one else will read the full page.
<b>4. Harvest Key Words</b>	3 min	Ask each person to skim their page and circle 5–7 words or short phrases that feel most alive. Transfer them onto the second sheet in large letters.
<b>5. Build the Collective Poem</b>	7 min	Form a standing circle around the flip-chart. One at a time, participants read a circled word/phrase aloud and tape it onto the paper, arranging freely. Repeat until all contributions are up. Read the emerging poem together—either silently or one volunteer voices it line-by-line.

<b>6. Group Reflection</b>	5–10 min	Discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which items surprised you about your own suitcase?</li> <li>• What patterns or contrasts appear in the collective poem?</li> <li>• How might we draw on these shared resources during the rest of our work together?</li> </ul>
<b>7. Close &amp; Optional Take-Away</b>	1 min	Invite a grounding breath. Offer to let participants keep (or tear up) their private writing; the poem can stay posted as a living reminder.

#### FACILITATOR NOTES & VARIATIONS

- **Automatic-writing rule:** If stuck, write “I’m stuck” until flow returns—keeps the hand moving.
- **Safety:** Emphasize that only circled words are shared; deeper content remains private.
- **Artistic twist:** Provide coloured pens to code resources vs. burdens; the poem’s visual mosaic becomes a metaphor for balance.
- **Digital option:** Use a shared online whiteboard; each person pastes words, then someone formats the poem.
- **Integration link:** Connect to the Gestalt idea of self-support—how recognizing existing resources increases creative adjustment.

## 25. EXAGGERATION



**Purpose:** This activity shines a spotlight on a habitual gesture, posture, or micro-behaviour, inflates it, and thereby reveals the emotions, needs, or messages hidden just below everyday awareness.

**Main theme:** Awareness & Presence

**Secondary themes:** Communication & Dialogue · Emotional Intelligence & Expression

**Duration:** ≈ 20 minutes (4 min framing & scan · 8 min paired exaggeration practice · 6 min debrief · 2 min close)

**Materials:** None (open space to move)

### ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Frame & Body Scan	4 min	Explain Gestalt's "make the implicit explicit" method: by exaggerating a subtle behaviour we give it a microphone. Invite participants to stand, close eyes, scan for a gesture or posture they do often—e.g., shoulder hunch, jaw clench, finger tap, eye-roll. Ask them to label it silently.

2. Pair Selection	1 min	Form pairs, A & B.
3. Round A – Exaggerate & Explore	4 min	<p>Actor A repeats their chosen gesture, amplifying size, speed, or tension for 30 seconds. Observer B watches, then asks two open prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"What emotions show up with that?"</i></li> <li>• <i>"If the gesture could speak, what would it say?"</i></li> </ul> <p>A speaks in first person ("I feel ...", "I want ..."). Switch roles.</p>
4. Round B – Super-Exaggeration	4 min	<p>Repeat, but Actors now take the gesture to a caricature level—whole-body, vocal sound, or imagined dialogue—for another 30 seconds. Observer prompts:</p> <p><i>"What new layer appears?"</i>  <i>"Where do you feel it in your body now?"</i> Switch roles.</p>
5. Solo Integration	1 min	Partners separate, close eyes, notice after-sensations—heat, release, emotion shift.

6. Whole-Group Debrief	5 min	<p>In circle, invite shares:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“My gesture’s hidden message was ...”</li> <li>“Exaggerating it taught me ...”</li> </ul> <p>Relate to daily life: How might noticing the early, subtle version help with living Comhlámh values e.g., integrity, respect?</p>
7. Closure	1 min	Collective breath, shake arms, return to neutral stance.

## FACILITATOR NOTES &amp; VARIATIONS

- Safety:** If exaggeration triggers discomfort, participants may tone it down or pick a different gesture.
- Depth slider:** For advanced groups, follow with a creative adjustment round—ask, “What new movement would satisfy the need you discovered?”
- Silent option:** Observer can mirror the actor’s gesture instead of verbal prompts, letting the body “talk” to itself.
- Online adaptation:** Use gallery view; partners pin each other to observe gestures clearly.

Source: Adapted from Ángeles Martín, Manual Práctico de Psicoterapia Gestalt, p. 136

## 26. Clay Statue



**Purpose:** This activity offers a way to explore embodied communication and empathy by physically “sculpting” another person into an emotional or attitudinal posture—and to notice the internal resonances that arise for both “sculptor” and “clay.”

**Main theme:** Embodiment & Movement

**Secondary themes:** Emotional Intelligence & Expression · Awareness & Presence · Boundaries & Consent

**Duration:** ≈ 30 minutes (5 min framing & demo · 16 min paired sculpting · 7 min group debrief · 2 min close)

**Materials:** None (optional soft instrumental music)

## ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Frame & Safety	3 min	Explain roles: Sculptor shapes partner’s body; Clay stays relaxed, eyes closed/soft, giving verbal feedback if anything feels painful or unsafe. Emphasize consent touch—sculptor checks (“Okay if I lift your arm?”).
2. Demo	2 min	Facilitator briefly sculpts an assistant into a simple “curiosity” pose, naming safety cues and micro-adjustments.

<b>3. Round A – Sculptor 1</b>	4 min	Pairs spread out. Sculptor gently moulds Clay into a posture that expresses an emotion or attitude (e.g., “determination,” “tenderness”). When finished, they step back and silently observe for 20 seconds, sensing their own body and feelings.
<b>4. Quick Check-in</b>	2 min	Clay (still in pose) shares short descriptors: body sensations + emotion words (“warm chest, sense of pride”). Sculptor responds with one line: “ <i>Looking at this statue I feel...</i> ”.
<b>5. Round B – Switch Roles</b>	4 min	Partners exchange roles; repeat sculpting and check-in.
<b>6. Round C – Self-Adjustment</b>	4 min	Each person returns to the statue created for them, then adjusts it 5–10 % so it feels even truer—owning the posture. Hold for three breaths; notice shift.
<b>7. Pair Reflection</b>	2 min	Discuss: “What changed when I made the micro-adjustment?”
<b>8. Whole-Group Debrief</b>	7 min	Prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clays: How did it feel to be shaped? Any surprises in body sensation?</li> </ul>

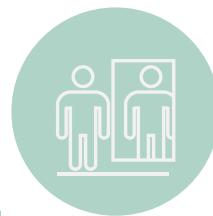
<b>9. Closure</b>	2 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sculptors: What emotions surfaced while you formed the statue?</li> <li>• How might this translate to reading non-verbal cues in daily life?</li> </ul>
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#### FACILITATOR NOTES & VARIATIONS

- **Consent first:** If touch is uncomfortable, sculptor can mirror the desired shape with their own body and Clay imitates.
- **Energy modulation:** Play with tempo—slow, meditative sculpting lowers arousal; faster sculpting adds playfulness.
- **Depth option:** After self-adjustment, invite participants to let the statue move for 10 seconds, seeing how emotion evolves.
- **Wheelchair adaptation:** Sculptor focuses on upper-body orientation, hand placement, head angle, facial expression.
- **Online version:** Breakout pairs; sculptor gives verbal instructions while demonstrating on camera.

Source: Adapted from IO2 EduGestalt Manual, Gestalt Theatre section, p.123

## 27. Mirror of Voices



**Purpose:** This activity offers the opportunity to practice precision listening by reflecting a speaker's exact words and affect, thereby increasing self-awareness, empathy, and felt connection.

**Main theme:** Communication & Dialogue

**Secondary themes:** Awareness & Presence · Emotional Intelligence & Expression

**Duration:** ≈ 20 minutes (3 min framing · 6 min Round 1 · 6 min Round 2 · 5 min group harvest)

**Materials:** None (chairs or cushions so partners sit face-to-face, eye level)

### ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Frame & Guidelines	3 min	Explain the difference between paraphrase and mirror: the listener will repeat the speaker's statement word-for-word (± a filler or two) and match emotional tone—tempo, volume, pauses. Two rules: (1) Speaker limits to ≈60 seconds; (2) Listener resists adding, editing, or reacting.

2. Round 1	6 min	<p>Partners decide A = Speaker, B = Mirror.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speaker A shares recent experience or feeling for ≤ 1 min.</li> <li>Mirror B repeats the segment verbatim, matching tone; then stops.</li> <li>Speaker A says one line describing their inner reaction to being mirrored ("I felt ..."). No discussion. Swap roles and repeat within the same 6 minutes if time permits.</li> </ul>
3. Round 2 (Switch Roles)	6 min	<p>Reverse order (B speaks, A mirrors). Follow the same protocol.</p>
4. Whole-Group Debrief	5 min	<p>Standing or seated circle prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As Speaker, what surprised you hearing your own words back?</li> <li>As Mirror, what was challenging about tone matching?</li> <li>How did this differ from normal "active listening"? Link insights to everyday dialogues—feedback, conflict, coaching.</li> </ul>

## FACILITATOR NOTES &amp; VARIATIONS

- “Exact enough” rule: Tiny omissions are fine, but changing meaning words (“never,” “always,” feeling adjectives) defeats the mirror.
- Pace control: If energy rises, cue partners to slow speech by 20 %.
- Tone-only variant: Second round the listener mirrors tone without words—hum, intonation, facial expression—then speakers share how that felt.
- Safety: Participants may choose neutral topics if personal material feels risky.
- Online adaptation: Use breakout pairs; speaker unmutes, listener mirrors; swap.

Source: Adapted from Manual Practico de Psicoterapia Gestalt, Ángeles Martín, Chapter on listening exercises.

## YOUR NOTES

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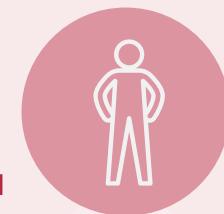
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## 28. Feeling Postures



**Purpose:** This activity sharpens the body-emotion link by rapidly shifting into physical shapes that express named feelings, helping participants recognise how emotions register somatically and how quickly they can self-organise around affect.

**Main theme:** Embodiment & Movement

**Secondary themes:** Emotional Intelligence & Expression · Awareness & Presence

**Duration:** ≈ 25 minutes

(3 min framing · 12 min posture rounds · 7 min small-group harvest · 3 min plenary close)

**Materials:** None (just an obstacle-free space; optional soft drum track to mark tempo)

## ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Frame & Warm-up	3 min	Explain that bodies will instantly shape themselves around a called emotion. Emphasize safety: <i>“Choose intensity that’s honest and kind to joints; you can modify or pass.”</i> Invite gentle stretching and two deep breaths.

<b>2. Moving Neutral</b>	1 min	Participants walk randomly at a relaxed pace, eyes soft, sensing feet on floor.
<b>3. Posture Rounds</b>	10 min	<p>Facilitator calls an emotion every ±45 seconds (e.g., Joy &gt; Sadness &gt; Anxiety &gt; Anger &gt; Curiosity &gt; Surprise &gt; Calm). On each cue, participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freeze walk</li> <li>• Let body snap or melt into a posture that feels like the emotion (no words, minimal sound).</li> </ul> <p>Hold 5-10 seconds, then resume neutral walk until the next cue.</p>
<b>4. Duo Check-in</b>	3 min	Nearest two people pair up and share: <i>“During [emotion] my body felt...”</i> and <i>“The hardest emotion to embody was...”</i> . Listen 30 s each, no comment.
<b>5. Small-Group Reflection</b>	4 min	<p>Form groups of 4-5. Discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one posture that surprised you</li> <li>• what body signal first told you an emotion was changing</li> <li>• a setting where quick body-checking could help (e.g., meetings, conflicts).</li> </ul>

<b>6. Plenary Harvest &amp; Close</b>	3 min	Circle up. Volunteers finish: <i>“When my body led, I realised...”</i> . Link to using somatic cues for self-regulation. Collective stretch, thank the group.
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#### FACILITATOR NOTES & VARIATIONS

- Intensity dial: Start with low-charge feelings; add spicier ones (shame, pride) once the group is warmed up.
- Freeze photo: Snap a quick photo (with consent) of each posture set; later show slide deck to illustrate body diversity.
- Blindfold option: For deeper inward focus, run a second round with eyes closed.
- Wheelchair adaptation: Emphasize head, hands, breath, and micro-torso shifts.
- Online version: Participants step back from webcam, facilitator calls emotions; gallery view becomes a collage of shapes.

Source: Adapted from Gestalt 2.0. Actualización en Psicoterapia Gestalt by Héctor Salama (Ch. 4).

## 29. Emotional Sculptors



**Purpose:** This activity is designed to develop empathy and sharpen non-verbal communication by physically shaping a partner into an embodied image of a specific emotion, then sensing what that posture stirs in both people.

**Main theme:** Embodiment & Movement

**Secondary themes:** Communication & Dialogue · Emotional Intelligence & Expression · Awareness & Presence

**Duration:** ≈ 30 minutes

(5 min framing & demo · 16 min paired sculpting · 7 min group debrief · 2 min closure)

**Materials:** None (optional: low-volume instrumental music)

### ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Frame & Consent Contract	3 min	Explain roles: Sculptor uses gentle, explicit-consent touch or verbal cues to position Clay. Clay keeps eyes closed or softened, saying "stop" or adjusting if discomfort arises.

2. Demonstration	2 min	Facilitator shapes an assistant into "loneliness," narrating consent checks and micro-adjustments.
3. Round A – Sculptor 1	4 min	Pairs spread out. Sculptor forms Clay into a chosen emotional statue (anger, joy, awe, shame, etc.). When finished, Sculptor steps back for 20 seconds, noticing internal reactions.
4. Brief Check-in	2 min	Clay (still holding pose) names 2–3 body sensations & one feeling word. Sculptor replies with a single sentence: "Looking at this statue I feel...".
5. Switch Roles – Sculptor 2	4 min	Repeat sculpting and check-in.
6. Resonance Round	4 min	Return to first statue. This time both partners enter the pose side-by-side for three deep breaths, noticing shared or contrasting sensations. Repeat with second statue.

### 7. Whole-Group Debrief

7 min

Prompts:

- How did it feel to give vs receive shape
- What helped the emotion look/feel clear?
- How might this inform reading body language in real interactions?

### 8. Closure

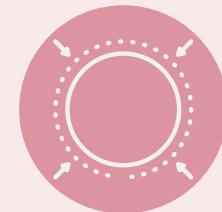
2 min

Collective stretch & shake-out; partners thank each other.

#### FACILITATOR NOTES & VARIATIONS

- **No-touch option:** Sculptor mirrors the posture with their own body for Clay to imitate.
- **Energy dial:** Choose low-charge emotions first; progress to higher intensity only if the group feels steady.
- **Depth add-on:** After posing, ask each Clay: "If this statue could say one sentence, what would it speak?"
- **Wheelchair access:** Focus on torso, head, hand placement, breath pace—whatever range is available.
- **Online version:** Sculptor gives step-by-step verbal directions while demonstrating on camera.

## 30. Boundaries Walk



**Purpose:** This activity gives participants a direct, bodily experience of where and how their personal boundary is activated, and the chance to practice signalling that boundary clearly and respectfully.

**Main theme:** Boundaries & Consent

**Secondary themes:** Awareness & Presence · Emotional Intelligence & Expression

**Duration:** ≈ 20 minutes (3 min framing · 10 min walk cycles · 5 min debrief · 2 min close)

**Materials:** None (just an unobstructed corridor-length space)

#### ACTIVITY FLOW

PHASE	APPROX. TIME	GUIDANCE
1. Frame & Safety Contract	3 min	Explain: "You will be in pairs, facing each other with some distance in between. For the first round, A will be 'approacher' and B will be 'receiver'. As receiver, B will be practicing sensing the exact moment that

		<p>'enough' arrives (where they need A to stop approaching) and signalling this without apology. B may stop the A with a raised hand, a word ('stop'), or a step back. A passing by B (i.e. not stopping) is allowed." Establish a visible STOP gesture that halts all movement.</p>
<b>2. Form Two Lines</b>	—	<p>Participants create two parallel lines 3–4 m apart, facing one another. Line A = Approachers first; Line B = Receivers.</p>
<b>3. Cycle 1 – Slow Approach</b>	5 min	<p>On a signal, each Approacher walks very slowly toward their partner. Receiver lets the approach continue until their body says "stop," then signals. Approacher freezes, notices own sensations, then steps back. Brief eye contact, nod, reset. Repeat 2–3 times, experimenting with: half-speed, eyes softer, eyes closed (Receiver chooses).</p>
<b>4. Switch Roles</b>	5 min	<p>Lines swap functions; repeat cycle. Encourage Receivers to try a different signal style (verbal vs. non-verbal) and attend to the shift in felt clarity.</p>



<b>5. Whole- Group Debrief</b>	5 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standing circle prompts:</li> <li>Receivers: Where in your body did the boundary cue appear?</li> <li>Approachers: How did you know you'd been signaled clearly?</li> <li>What helped (or blurred) mutual respect?</li> </ul>
<b>6. Closure</b>	2 min	<p>Invite a collective breath, shoulder roll, and silent acknowledgement of each partner's boundary wisdom.</p>

#### FACILITATOR NOTES & VARIATIONS

- Distance markers If helpful, tape floor lines every 50 cm so people can name their comfort distance numerically.
- Layered consent Receivers may pre-set a hard limit ("stop at the second tape line") to test anticipatory boundaries.
- Energy modulation Add a version with quicker steps to feel difference between surprise and gradual intrusion.
- Accessibility Wheel- or chair-users cue approach speed; distance can be closed by rolling or leaning.
- Online adaptation Partners in breakout rooms inch chairs toward webcams; Receiver signals by raising palm to camera.

Source: Adapted from Manual Practico de Psicoterapia Gestalt, Chapter on boundaries.

# ANNEX I

Here is a menu of additional one-breath sentence-stems you can rotate into “If I Were Brave Enough ...”. They are grouped by the kind of contact they invite—pick two or three that fit your group’s safety level and learning focus:



## ANNEX 1

### FOCUS SUGGESTED STEM

#### Curious Requests

- “If I were brave enough, I’d ask you to tell me ...”
- “Something I really wonder about you is ...”

#### Self-Disclosure

- “If I spoke the truth unfiltered, I’d say ...”
- “One thing I’ve been hiding from you is ...”

#### Immediate Impression

- “When I’m with you right now, I notice ...”
- “The energy I sense from you in this moment is ...”

#### Assumptions & Projections

- “The story I make up about you is ...”
- “A quick judgment that popped up for me is ...”

#### Needs & Boundaries

- “What I need from you (but haven’t asked for) is ...”
- “One boundary I want to name is ...”

#### Appreciation & Acknowledgement

- “Something I appreciate about you right now is ...”
- “A quality in you that inspires me is ...”

<b>Vulnerability &amp; Fear</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "If I dared to be vulnerable, I would admit ..."</li> <li>• "What scares me about saying this is ..."</li> </ul>
<b>Body Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "As I look at you, my body feels ..."</li> <li>• "A sensation arising in me right now is ..."</li> </ul>
<b>Future Invitation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "A way I'd like us to relate differently is ..."</li> <li>• "If I were bold, I'd invite you to ..."</li> </ul>

#### TIPS FOR USE

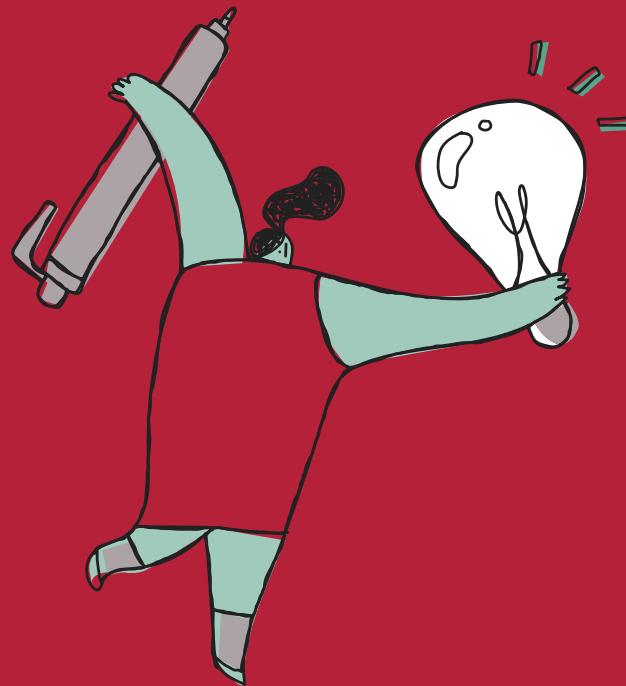
Start lighter, deepen gradually. Early rounds can use impression or appreciation stems; later rounds can venture into vulnerabilities or boundaries as trust builds.

- **One stem per round.** Keeping everyone on the same prompt maintains clarity and lets participants compare experiences.
- **Emphasize the rules.** One breath, no commentary, silent receiving. The power lies in uncluttered contact.
- **Offer the “pass” option.** Courage includes honoring true limits; passing is an authentic response.
- **Feel free to adapt wording** to your group’s language and cultural nuance.

## ANNEX II

Below is a 75-item prompt bank you can dip into for sociogram rounds.

They are grouped by relative emotional/safety intensity. Adjust wording—or skip items—based on culture, context, and how much processing time you have afterwards.



## LOW-RISK (25 PROMPTS)

1. Who makes you laugh most quickly?
2. Whose was the first name you learned when the course began?
3. Who tends to arrive earliest?
4. Who often volunteers to read aloud?
5. Whose handwriting do you admire?
6. Who brings snacks or shares food most often?
7. Who changes the room layout when needed?
8. Who keeps the group on schedule?
9. Whose digital skills do you rely on?
10. Who's the best at explaining instructions in plain language?
11. Whose facial expressions help you understand what is happening?
12. Who notices when someone looks lost?
13. Who's most likely to have a spare pen?
14. Whose storytelling keeps you engaged?
15. Who quietly tidies up after sessions?
16. Who offers the warmest greeting?
17. Whose choice of music would you trust for a break?
18. Who's most likely to ask clarifying questions?
19. Who laughs at almost every joke?

20. Who remembers the small, personal details you share?
21. Whose posture shows active listening?
22. Who makes complex ideas feel simple?
23. Who keeps the room feeling calm?
24. Whose positive energy lifts your mood?
25. Whose creativity do you notice in group tasks?

## MEDIUM-RISK (25 PROMPTS)

1. Who challenges your viewpoints in a useful way?
2. Who do you turn to for honest feedback?
3. Whose silence can you sometimes misinterpret?
4. Who would you want as a project partner under deadline pressure?
5. Who helped you the most during a difficult exercise?
6. Whose leadership style inspires you?
7. Who encourages you to take healthy risks?
8. With whom have you had a misunderstanding that got resolved?
9. Who holds the group accountable when commitments slip?
10. Who has surprised you by stepping up in an unexpected way?

11. Who brings a different cultural perspective that you value?
12. Whose emotional range do you respect?
13. Who pushes the pace faster than you prefer?
14. Who slows the pace in a way that benefits learning?
15. Who would you trust to mediate a small conflict?
16. Who seems hardest on themselves?
17. Whose appreciation means the most to you?
18. Who do you share resources or articles with?
19. Who makes you re-examine your assumptions?
20. With whom would you practice a new skill first?
21. Who energizes the room during dull moments?
22. Whose feedback has stung—but proved valuable?
23. Who do you quietly emulate?
24. Who keeps you grounded when emotions run high?
25. Who feels like an ally when you're uncertain?

## HIGHER-RISK (25 PROMPTS)

1. Use only with a well-established trust container and ample debrief time.
2. Who has the most informal influence in this group?
3. Who intimidates you a little?

4. Who do you worry about disappointing?
5. Whose approval do you secretly seek?
6. Who do you find most physically attractive?
7. Who would you most like to know on a deeper level?
8. Who have you avoided giving feedback to?
9. Who triggers your impatience?
10. Who would you choose to accompany you in a personal crisis?
11. Whose boundaries are you unsure about?
12. Who do you fear judging you?
13. Who would you nominate to run the organisation tomorrow?
14. Who do you sense carries unspoken hurt?
15. Who do you think underestimates themselves?
16. Whose values feel farthest from your own?
17. Who would you hesitate to confront directly?
18. Who challenges power structures most openly?
19. Who do you notice taking up the most space (time, talk, energy)?
20. Who do you sometimes envy?
21. Who do you feel secretly protective of?
22. Who mirrors qualities you dislike in yourself?

23. Who would you trust with a deeply personal secret?
24. Who do you sense might leave the group first if stress rose?
25. Who do you feel competitive with?
26. Whose absence would change the group dynamic the most?

#### USAGE TIPS

- Sequence matters: Start with a few low-risk items, feel the room, then decide whether to progress.
- Opt-out is vital: Re-state the right to pass or stand neutral at every round.
- Touch alternatives: If physical contact is too much, allow pointing or standing nearby.
- Debrief depth: The higher the risk, the longer you'll likely need for emotional processing afterward.

Feel free to remix wording or swap prompts to suit your context.





# Comhlámh

# Code of Good Practice