

Activity 0.04 Baseline Targets (The Arts)

Module: Introduction Module

Duration: Introduction Module

Social Development Themes: Arts

Summary:

'The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.' - Albert Einstein.

An artistic process can take us to places that might feel uncomfortable, especially for people who have had little exposure to the arts. This activity introduces the idea of our 'comfort zone' and what happens if we spend too much time outside of it. It explores how to look after ourselves – physically and emotionally – when on the journey through the Active Citizens river, and encourages participants to see the workshop as a space to safely take some risks.

Learning Outcomes:

Understand Active Citizens

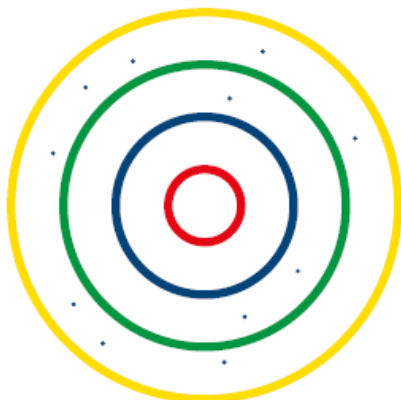
Preparations and Materials:

Flip chart, flip chart pens and Post-its.

Draw the following diagram on a large flip chart drawing (four sheets of flip chart taped together)

Pin up outcomes from Session 0.3: Tree of Expectations.

Figure 9: Expectations



Dots in the outer rings indicate that participants don't know much about the Active Citizens programme.

Approach:

1. Introduce the three circles: The comfort zone – an area of familiarity and safety, where we spend most of our time, and which keeps us safe and secure. The 'stretch' or learning zone – where we're doing things differently; it's new and potentially exhilarating but we know we can step back into our comfort zone when we need to. This is the place we want to spend part of our time during the workshop. However, the 'panic' or danger zone is the third circle – a place that we don't want to spend any time in; it means we've stretched too far, it's unpleasant, stressful and can result in a 'never again' attitude where we don't want to go through similar experiences again.

2. Ask participants what they feel anxious about in terms of an arts-based workshop? What is outside of their comfort zone? Performing in front of people? Speaking in a group? More physical exercises etc.

3. Ask them how long they think they should spend in the stretch zone? What will help them to spend time there? How should the group behave to support people to do things that are outside their comfort zone?

Debrief:

Text Share with the group that, at times during this workshop, they will be encouraged to step outside of their comfort zones. Although this might seem daunting, this is where learning takes place. Some academics suggest that we should spend 10% of our time in the stretch zone. This will differ among participants and could increase as the workshop progresses and trust within the group increases.

This workshop is about accessing our creativity and having the courage to be vulnerable or to try something new. However, we need to look after ourselves and know that we can step back to our comfort zone when we need to. Encourage the group to trust the facilitators, as well as the process, and to be brave.

Are there things that the group could do during the workshop to help build an atmosphere of trust and safety (see notes for facilitating an arts approach)?
Facilitators need to be culturally sensitive when thinking about activities. How comfortable will participants feel moving in the space with each other?
Are there certain cultural or religious norms and expectations that need to be respected and upheld?
How can facilitators challenge some of the cultural stereotypes or assumptions around gender and mixed-gender groups?