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## **Group Coaching Planning Guide**

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Inspiration to Help You Bring Your Group Coaching Dream to  
Life, One Week and One Step at a Time





## Group Skills - The Next Level

1. What new facilitation skills will I need to develop or expand, using the Four Pillars model, so I can meet the needs of groups?
  - a. Self-Awareness
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. Safe and Sacred Space
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - c. Mindful Presence
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - d. Authentic Communication
  
2. What new information or tools will I need to investigate to manage an online learning environment for my participants?



3. What logistics would I need to handle ahead of time to make my participants feel welcomed and engaged right from the start?
4. What new group facilitation techniques might support me in feeling more comfortable leading a group?
5. What strengths do I already possess as a coach that will serve me well when I work with a group?



6. How much structure and flexibility do I need to feel confident and assured when I facilitate a group experience? How comfortable am I responding to the group's needs as they arise? What's my dance between structure and flow?



## Your Group Coaching Vision

You came to this program because something is calling itself forward through you, in the form of a new group coaching program or process. So, let's start giving that idea room to grow and take shape. I recommend you take time to tend to your vision a little each day. Without trying to push to make something happen, but to slowly encourage the expression to grow and reveal its secrets to you. These questions will get you started.



What do you know about this group coaching you want to offer?

What passion in you is driving this work?



How do you wish to be of service to others?

What outcomes do you want to create for your dream clients?

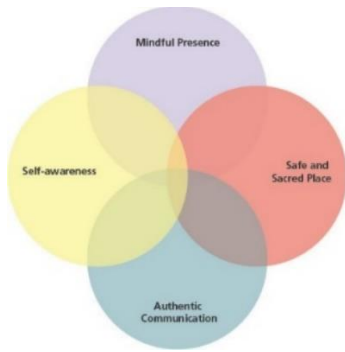
What did you learn this week in the content that is providing more clarity for your group coaching vision?



Anything else?







## Four Pillars Checklist

- **Self-Awareness**
  - ✓ Reflects focus on those present in the group and their lived experiences
  - ✓ Pays attention to energy flow of both individual participants and the larger group and uses own self-awareness to respond to needs of group
  - ✓ Teaches participants to expand and utilize their self-awareness to build group synergy
  - ✓ Manages individual triggers and righting reflex and assists members of the group experiencing triggers or responding with the righting reflex
  - ✓ Engages with different learning styles and personalities while maintaining awareness of own preferences
- **Safe and Sacred Space**
  - ✓ Offers ways to welcome the participants to the group each week
  - ✓ Provides clarity about confidentiality as a group participant and reinforces when needed
  - ✓ Creates group agreements, norms, etc. to support the group process
  - ✓ Provides clear roles and responsibilities for all people involved
  - ✓ Manages participant behavior to maximize safety of group
  - ✓ Handles strong emotions or changes in group energy effectively
  - ✓ Connects with empathy and warmth to group participants and teaches participants to do the same with one another
- **Mindful Presence**
  - ✓ Operates mindfully present and extends this expectation to group participants
  - ✓ Creates structures to support the person speaking
  - ✓ Helps participants be present to their mind, body and spirit experiences that arise in the group coaching process



- **Authentic Communication**

- ✓ Conveys nonjudgmental language and tone and facilitates participants doing the same in interactions
- ✓ Demonstrates deep listening and helps participants gain skill in learning to listen to understand and validate
- ✓ Uses curious open questions and powerful reflections, and also teaches participants to do the same in interactions with one another
- ✓ Elevates group experience by noting themes, shifts, aha moments, and other powerful openings that arise from the group
- ✓ Teaches group participants to capitalize on the synergy of the group by validating and bringing attention to participant's statements that promote forward movement, or highlighting the inner wisdom of participants and the larger group



## Group Skills – The Next Level



### Managing Group Dynamics Tip List

#### Strategies for dealing with disruptive participants

- Refer back to group agreements
- Defer to the entire group with questions such as “How can we get the most out of our time together?” or divert by noting “I really appreciate your contribution and I want to make sure we meet the needs of everyone here, are you willing to let me refocus our conversation?”
- Have an individual conversation with the participant after the coaching session to discuss your concerns and invite new awareness and ways to participate that support the group process.
- Be curious about the behavior and ask a question to help the participant pause and go deeper. For instance, “Is there a need you have that is not being met? And if so, can you tell me about it so we can create a process that supports all members of the group?”
- Give the disruptive participant an active role so they feel invested in the process.

#### Strategies for dealing with quiet or energetically absent participants

- Private conversation - “Is there something that would make you feel more comfortable in this group experience? I’d really like to hear your wisdom in the group more often.”
- Calling on a person directly and simply noting, “I am curious what your thoughts are about xyz.”
- Have an activity or interaction in which each member of the group has to offer something.
- Offer smaller group interactions.

#### Strategies for dealing with ramblers

- Offer an agreement about bottom lining or lasering
- Have a word or phrase that helps the group note that the conversation is off track to help refocus
- Provide time limits for shares to help provide structure
- Have a private conversation helping the participant build self-awareness and start focusing on getting to the point and only sharing relevant details. Consider asking them to question how their style of participation is contributing to the group’s overall process and seeing if they want to do anything differently.



## **Strategies for participants who interrupt, know it all, or love to give advice**

- Refer to agreements and have one about the person talking and how that should be treated such as “The person talking is not interrupted unless xyz.”
- Role model listening to understand or ask questions to help participants listen to understand vs. offering advice.
- Provide up front information about the coaching process including how this is different than other conversations they are used to.
- If it persists, have a private conversation.
- Speak up and interrupt and redirect them so it doesn’t dampen others’ experiences. Be direct but not confrontational, “I appreciate your contribution, and one of our agreements is to listen to understand and not give advice, so I am going to ask that consider how you can speak about your experience and what you learned from it without using it to advise another about what they should do. Is that a reasonable request?”

## **Strategies for participants who are argumentative, yes but, angry or hostile**

- Have an agreement about respectful communication with details about what that means.
- Have a private conversation.
- Address the behavior so the other group participants feel safe. It can be a general comment about the energy of the group and how you are experiencing it as well as an invitation to hear from others.
- Ask a direct question of the person to see if there is something they need to deal with to move forward.



**Designing Your Group Experience**

1. Start with brainstorming – mind maps, post-it notes, meditating, stream of consciousness writing, etc. Focus on high level and creative ideas. Details come later.
  - Title
  - Key Words and Phrases
  - Topics
  - Outcomes and Transformations you want to create

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**3. Get to the Details**

- Number and Length of Sessions
- Day of the Week and Time of Day
- Target Audience
- Topic for Each Session
- List of Objectives for Each Session
- Activities and Exercises to Support

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4. Structures, Back-Up Plans, Etc. – anything else that will support you and your group of participants

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## Marketing Your Group Experience

### 1. Start with your target audience –

- Who are they – gender if applicable, life experience, age, concern or issue, parent/non-parent, topics they are interested in, etc.?
- Where they hang out and get information?
- What common challenges are they experiencing and how do you hear them talk about it?
- What solutions or transformations do they want to create in their lives?
- What skills, life experiences and tools do you have that meet their needs?

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2. Identify your passions, strengths, and unique perspectives around this topic

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- 4. What strategies will you use to communicate your offering? – social media, your newsletter, others’ newsletters, your website, support groups, networking events, affiliates, etc.

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5. What visuals and energetics do you want to convey? – colors, fonts, graphics, feelings you want to create for your target audience, etc.

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## Your Group Coaching Vision – Part 2

What have you learned about what's calling itself forward in your coaching practice? Are you taking time to tend to your vision a little each day? Is there anything new you learned when doing the visualization? Anything else you want to capture here? Are you noticing ideas, activities, key words or phrases, etc. that really speak to you? And finally, is there anything you need to feel supported in moving forward?



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