

SESSION

01

SORT It

PAST, PRESENT
& FUTURE
LEARNING



Youth Work Ireland
Cork

PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE LEARNING

Please thoroughly read the introductory chapter and the literature review to ensure you are familiar with all concepts and models, and that you can confidently explain them simply and clearly to participants.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this session participants will:

- ▷ Understand the purpose of the programme and the core model underpinning the programme
- ▷ Feel heard about their previous experiences of learning
- ▷ Understand the idea of 'fluid' intelligence



SESSION TIMETABLE

Section	Time
Trickle In	10
Intro to the programme	15
Group agreement	20
My learning so far	30
Growing Smart	15
Close	10

MATERIALS NEEDED

- SORT It Module 1 PowerPoint presentation
- Computer, projector and screen
- Speakers connected to the computer to hear the video
- Small portable pocket folders for all participants
- A small bell or a mindfulness app bell on a smartphone
- Copy of Hand-out 1 for each participant
- A few copies of the 'word sheet' words cut out and spread out on a table
- Flip charts and markers
- Sticky notes
- Two large (e.g. flipchart) sheets with 'past' and 'future' written on them
- Four large (e.g. flipchart) sheets with the statements in the 'trickle in' exercise written on them



TRICKLE IN EXERCISE

➔ SLIDE 1

- ▷ Have four flipcharts up on a wall with the following headings
 - ➔ I learn and solve problems by watching videos
 - ➔ I learn and solve problems by talking to other people
 - ➔ I learn and solve problems by reading articles
 - ➔ I learn and solve problems by writing, doodling or drawing
- ▷ Have a selection of sticky notes near the pages
- ▷ Ask participants, as they come in to consider each of the four statements and whether it is 'not true' 'sort of true' or 'very true' for them
- ▷ Ask them to put one sticky on each statement, rating how true it is for them.
- ▷ Once they have done this they can sit down
- ▷ Have a discussion as participants are coming in, completing the exercise and sitting down, about the different ways we can learn and solve problems.



INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAMME

AIM Participants understand the purpose of the programme and the model behind it.

OVERVIEW

There are three parts to this introduction:

- a) Introducing the 'Mindful Minute'
- b) Giving an overview of the course
- c) Giving an overview of the models

A MINDFUL MINUTE

➔ SLIDE 2

- ▷ Welcome the participants and ask them to sit quietly. Tell them we are going to rest for one minute and do a relaxation exercise. Highlight that sitting quietly for a minute might sound easy, but for some people this can be difficult, and it requires practice. Reassure them that it's fine if they find it a bit difficult at first.
- ▷ Talk them through the exercise slowly, ensuring your instructions are well spaced to allow the group to undertake each small task (concentrating, breathes etc.), try to use a clear calm voice and model the mindfulness yourself.
- ▷ Start by asking them to concentrate on feeling their feet on the ground, the chair beneath them and the air on their skin... next ask them to take some deep breathes concentrating on feeling the breath in and out. This purpose of this exercise is to help them feel present in this room here and now.
- ▷ Ring the bell / mindfulness app at the end of the minute
- ▷ Explain that every week, to help focus the group and make sure everyone brings their concentration into the room, the session will start with a quick mindful minute or other exercise

B OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE➔ **SLIDE 3**

Talk the young people through the overall programme (all information is in the introductory chapter of the programme) addressing the following points:

- ▷ This is a psychology course
- ▷ It is to help us learn about our brains and how they work
- ▷ It is to help us learn how we respond to different problems, particularly in work or education situations
- ▷ We will do some experiments and exercises to see how our brain changes
- ▷ We'll use computer games, discussions and exercises where get to move around
- ▷ The course will be very practical which means all the learning can be applied in real life situations
- ▷ The course will be fun and hard work

C MODELS➔ **SLIDE 4-6**

- ▷ Having familiarised yourself with the models before the class, talk the young people through the basic concepts of:
 - ➔ Old Brain and New Brain
 - ➔ Old brain problem solving and new brain problem solving
 - ➔ The SORT it Model
- ▷ Give the hand-out of the diagrams (at end of module) and a folder to each participant, explaining that they can store notes and hand-out from the course

20
MIN**EXERCISE ONE: GROUP AGREEMENT**➔ **SLIDE 7**

AIM Participants develop rules or guidelines for how the group will manage itself over the course of the programme

INSTRUCTIONS

- ▷ Let participants know the purpose of the exercise, that we will develop guidelines for our group for how we will work together
- ▷ These may be written up by the tutor and stuck up at each class to remind the group
- ▷ Wherever possible, the group should come up with the rules themselves.
- ▷ Positive reinforcement and encouragement should inform the discussion at all times

FACILITATORS NOTES

It is important that from the earliest point, the tutor is modelling the values of acceptance, honesty and understanding regardless of where the young person is coming from or their contribution

To promote a caring, trauma informed learning environment, participants who contribute should be positively reinforced at all times, even if what they say may not be a suitable rule from the tutor's perspective. If a young person comes up with something inappropriate or unsuitable, the tutor should focus on the positive and shift the idea in some way to either make it applicable to the group or highlighting it's usefulness elsewhere but not for this group e.g. 'great idea... I can see why that makes great sense in X but I'm wondering if here we might Y'

POTENTIAL CATEGORIES FOR THE GROUP AGREEMENT

ACCEPTANCE

We should accept one another, and feel free to be ourselves, share our stories and not feel judged by the tutor or other people in the group

UNDERSTANDING

We should try to understand where other people are coming from and let them know that when we are discussing different things

HONESTY

We should be as honest as possible with one another, while being kind

CONFIDENTIALITY

Participants should respect one another, and only share stories about anyone in the group with their permission.

PARTICIPATION

A good way to really learn about ourselves, is to take part, do the exercises, provide feedback to other people and join in conversations. Still, we know some people are shy, some people don't like to talk in a group and some things are just difficult to talk about. Nobody has to do or say anything they don't want, and we want you to take this at your own pace. If you're feeling a bit shy, we encourage you to push yourself to join in, or have a chat to the tutor about it if you need to.

MINDING YOURSELF

Sometimes when we talk about personal issues, like our families, we can get upset. If you find that you are feeling down and you want a break from the group that's alright, let the tutor know, and they will come outside with you, or you can take a few minutes by yourself if you need to.

TIMEKEEPING

Everyone should arrive on time so we can get the most out of the sessions together and not have to repeat ourselves

If you can't make it to one the sessions

The tutor will try to catch up and bring you up to speed during the week.



EXERCISE TWO: MY LEARNING SO FAR

➔ SLIDE 8

AIM Participants understand that even if we had negative past experience of school, it doesn't mean all our future learning will be the same.

FACILITATORS NOTE

It is through this exercise that participants should learn that this is a safe space, where they can be themselves, talk as they usually do and be honest about their opinions or ideas on school. It should be dynamic, challenging and fun.

INSTRUCTIONS

- a) Put out the two sheets with 'past' and 'future' headings out on the floor, or in a central point in the room that will be accessible
- b) Ask the young people to come up to the table and pick words out to describe their past experiences of school
- c) Ask the young people to also think about words from their heads to describe their past experiences of school. Encourage them to be honest, to curse, to laugh and to be as critical as they feel. If they had positive experiences, they should share them too. Their experiences may relate to, for example
 - Themselves
 - Teachers, schools or institutions
 - Friends or classmates
- d) Ask the young people to put some of their words representing their past experiences on the 'past' sheet – they can either place the cut out words, or write some new ones on the sheet
- e) Now, facilitate a discussion about what they would like to see happening in the future:

Group Question	Points to Include in Discussion
Will learning always be bad or unpleasant?	Even if many past experiences have been difficult or only some have been good, it is possible that the future will be different
Could you flip or reverse some of the stuff that you've said didn't work so well? What would that look like if it was the opposite?	Try to describe together what positive learning or working environment looks like. This is to try to describe what a good learning experience would look like
What words would you use to describe a positive learning experience	Ask Participants to pick some words to describe the positive future. See if they are in the list of words that they have and if not they can write them down
What are your hopes for future learning?	Try to remember that learning can be in a classroom, youth service or work

- ▷ Finally, ask the young people to do the same exercise (e.g. using the cut out words or writing words to describe future experiences of learning) as previous but for how they would like learning to be in the future, reflecting the discussion you just had.



EXERCISE THREE: GROWING SMART

➔ SLIDE 9-10

AIM Participants understand that our ability/intelligence is not set, but can be developed through practice

OVERVIEW

There is one part to this exercise: Discussion on fluidity of ability and intelligence

PART A: INSTRUCTIONS – STANDING SCALE

- a) Ask all participants to stand up

- b)** Point to one side of the room and say –
 - Stand at this side if you think you are smart, stupid or something in between and you can't change that, like you've either got intelligence or you don't
 - Stand at this side if you think that you can change your intelligence and it's not set for life
- c)** Briefly ask one or two people to discuss their reasoning and explain that you're going to watch a video together about this
- d)** Together, watch the growth mind-set video on slide 9
- e)** Read out the quote from Michael Jordan on the presentation (slide 10)
- f)** Ask again 'how many agree that you are either smart, stupid, or in between, and you can't change that, like you've either got intelligence or you haven't
- g)** Discuss

Group Question	Points to Include for Discussion
Do you think what you believe about your intelligence can hold you back	Those who believe intelligence is fixed typically feel that if they encounter a problem that they cannot immediately master, that they are not capable of overcoming it. Those with a growth mindset are more likely to problem solve and try to find a way around it.
Can you do a 'work out' on your intelligence like you can on your body in the gym?	Intelligence and ability are things that can grow and develop, like our muscles, through exercise and work
What do people with a fixed mindset believe?	They have a certain amount of intelligence or ability, and that's that; nothing can be done to change it. This means that they might not make an effort to face challenges, and are therefore unlikely to succeed in managing difficulties
What do people in the growth mindset believe?	Their talents and abilities can be developed through passion, education, and persistence. This means that they will make an effort to manage challenges. They might not always succeed but they stand a better chance of success than if they didn't try.



TIME Allow up to 10 minutes for this session

AIM Use this close to introduce the idea of the close of the group to the participants. The close is a 10-minute wind down to clear their headspace and get them ready to go on to their next class.

INSTRUCTIONS

Explain: let participants know that the close each week will have three parts - a simple reflection on what we have learned, a small challenge they have to take home with them in order to practice what they learned, and a grounding mindfulness exercise

Reflection: For this week, participants can simply say:

- ▷ One thing they've learned
- ▷ One thing they are looking forward to learning more about

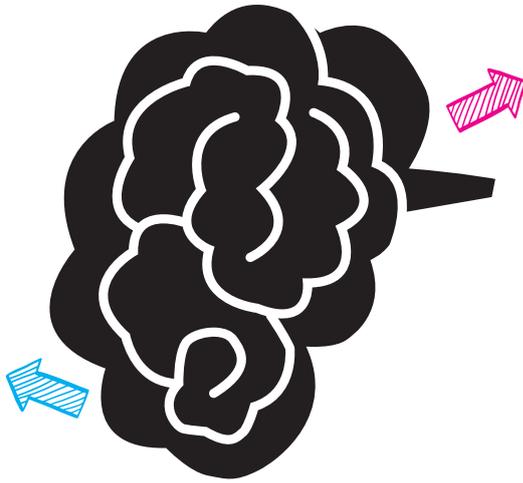
Take the Lesson: Explain to participants that each week, they will be asked to 'take the lesson' from the day into the week. The task for this week is to:

- ▷ Keep an eye on the different things they learn in different places over the week, and report back next week on one new thing that they learn. Anything at all. It can be at home, it can be on a course, or with mates.

Grounding:

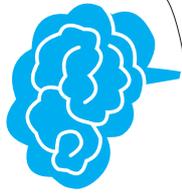
- ▷ Explain that every week, to formally close the group that we will do the same exercise which is to ground ourselves and focus ourselves
- ▷ Ring the bell/ mindfulness app
- ▷ Ask participants to look at their feet and feel them on the ground, feel their hands and feet.
- ▷ Thank the participants and wish them well until next week

NEW BRAIN
PROBLEM SOLVING



OLD BRAIN
FLIGHT OR FIGHT

SHIFT BRAIN
OLD TO NEW



OBJECTIVE

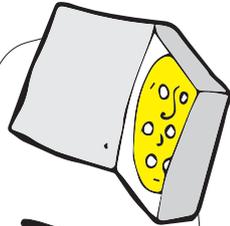


READ THE LIGHTS

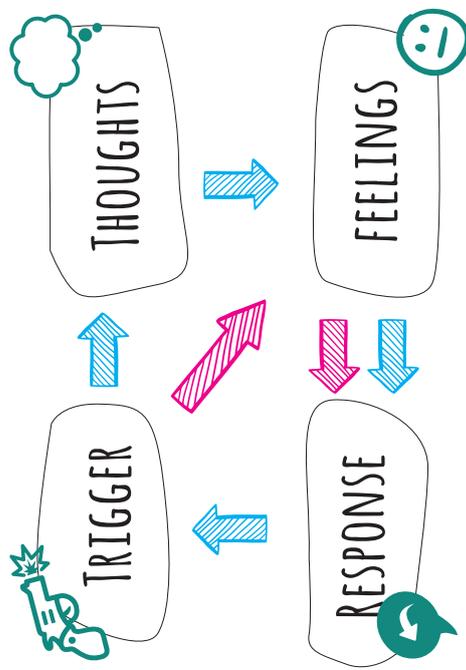


I CAN CHANGE
MAYBE I CAN CHANGE
I CAN'T CHANGE

TAKEAWAY
KNOWLEDGE



WHEN A PROBLEM COMES ALONG
OLD BRAIN OR NEW BRAIN



KEY
NEW BRAIN → OLD BRAIN

WORD SHEET

Boring	Enjoyable	Interested
Stressful	Stupid	Useless
Not interesting	Bollox	Strong
Don't give a shit	Deadly	Cared for
No personality	Helpful	Miserable
No creativity	Supportive	Smart
Teachers don't help	Shit	Stupid
Teachers have no respect	Mean	Respected
Old fashioned	Easy	Lonely
Picked on	Scary	Pissed off
Boring	Uncomfortable	Great
Hard	Trouble	Sleepy
Fun	Fighting	Buzzing
Annoying	Learning	Nervous
Caring	Happy	Understood
Safe	Bored	Confident
Dangerous	Excited	Annoyed
Good	Scared	Ashamed