

SEW Arts Activities Resource for Teaching Artists

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CONTENTS

1. Contents.....	Page 1
2. Introduction and Explanation of Resource.....	Page 1
3. List of Wellbeing Factors.....	Page 2
4. Curriculum Links.....	Page 2
5. Numbered List of Activities.....	Page 3
6. Cross Referencing Table Using Activity Numbers.....	Page 4
7. Activities.....	Page 5 - 41.

INTRODUCTION AND EXPLANATION OF RESOURCE

The Social and Emotional Wellbeing in the Arts Project (SEW - Arts Project) and its associated resources are designed to support arts organisations and individuals to intentionally promote the social and emotional wellbeing of young people through their arts programs.

This multidisciplinary arts resource includes a cross-referencing system that provides practical workshop activities to teaching artists across the following disciplines: Drama and Theatre, Music, Dance, Circus and Physical Education, and Visual Arts. It should be read alongside the [SEW - Arts Framework](#) to fully understand the guiding Principles and SEWB Pedagogies.

The purpose of this resource is to provide facilitators with a comprehensive set of existing arts activities mapped to the SEW-Arts Wellbeing Factors (WBFs) they best promote. Each activity highlights one particular WBF under the subheading “WBF to focus on”, exemplifying the aspect of social and emotional wellbeing it supports.

Following each activity description are:

- Key Messages related to the WBF
- Activity Instructions
- Suggested Reflection Points

These elements serve as examples of the messaging facilitators can use to best promote the WBF during delivery. At the end of each activity, alternative WBFs that the activity could also promote are listed to demonstrate adaptability and how intentional facilitation can shift focus.

Teaching artists are encouraged to tailor these reflection points and messages to suit their group’s needs.

There are 17 WBFs in total, with two activities per WBF across the disciplines.

Please use the cross-referencing system to find activities matching your desired WBF and artistic discipline. All activities have been tried and tested in workshops with young people by facilitators from diverse arts and education backgrounds.

WELLBEING FACTORS



[See the SEW-Arts Framework for definitions and explanations of each WBF and to download the WBF cards.](#)

CURRICULUM LINKS

Activities in this resource have been gathered from practitioners in extracurricular settings such as stage schools, after-school clubs, and holiday workshops. However, they can be adapted effectively for secondary school environments and curriculum-based learning. The SEW-Arts Framework is especially suited to supporting four of the Australian Curriculum's seven [General Capabilities](#), including Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capability, Ethical Understanding, and Intercultural Understanding.

Years 7 - 10

[Drama and Theatre](#)

[Music](#)

[Dance](#)

[Circus and Physical Education](#)

[Visual Arts](#)

Year 11 - 12

[Drama and Theatre](#)

[Music](#)

[Dance](#)

[Circus and Physical Education](#)

[Visual Arts](#)

NUMBERED ACTIVITIES LIST

1. **MIRRORING** In the Zone **DRAMA**
2. **HEAD, HEART, BODY in GESTURE** Self Awareness: Emotions **DANCE**
3. **THOUGHT COLLAGE** Self Awareness: Thoughts **VARTS**
4. **JUGGLING** Mindfulness **CIRCUS**
5. **SOUNDSCAPES** Sensory Awareness **MUSIC**
6. **THE ART CRITIC** Coping with Criticism **VARTS**
7. **COMPOSITION** Expressing Emotions **MUSIC**
8. **THE ALPHABET GAME** Managing Pressure **DRAMA**
9. **THE SAD CLOWN** Compassion **CIRCUS**
10. **SEQUENCING** Positive Peer Comparison **DANCE**
11. **INSTRUMENT BINGO** Listening **MUSIC**
12. **FAMOUS PAINTERS** Empathising **VARTS**
13. **SENSORY TABLEAUX** Working in Groups **DRAMA**
14. **TEACHING TUMBLING** Doing What I Value **CIRCUS**
15. **BODY PERCUSSION** Positive Body Image **MUSIC**
16. **SEVENS** Learning From Mistakes **DRAMA**
17. **PUSH HANDS** Trying Something New **DANCE**
18. **LINE DRAWING ROUND ROBIN** In the Zone **VARTS**
19. **HEAD, HEART, BODY in MOVEMENT** Self Awareness: Emotions **CIRCUS**
20. **WHAT ARE YOU DOING?** Self Awareness: Thoughts **DRAMA**
21. **MINDFUL MUSIC** Mindfulness **MUSIC**
22. **SIGHTLESS DISCO** Sensory Awareness **DANCE**
23. **SKILLS SWAP** Coping with Criticism **CIRCUS**
24. **COLOURS OF THE WEEK** Expressing Emotions **VARTS**
25. **BATTLE DANCE** Managing Pressure **DANCE**
26. **REENACTING THE NEWS** Compassion **DRAMA**
27. **COLLABORATION MASTERPIECE** Positive Peer Comparison **VARTS**
28. **ROUND-BY-THROUGH** Listening **DANCE**
29. **LOSERBALL** Empathising **DRAMA**
30. **THE BOY/GIRL BAND CHALLENGE** Working in Groups **MUSIC**
31. **SOLO COMPOSITION** Doing What I Value **MUSIC**
32. **SELF PORTRAITS** Positive Body Image **VARTS**
33. **SPEED CHOREO CHALLENGE** Learning From Mistakes **DANCE**
34. **SILKS DROP** Trying Something New **CIRCUS**
35. **LINKLATER BALLOON** Sensory Awareness **DRAMA**
36. **ARE YOU READY?** Working in Groups **CIRCUS**

CROSS REFERENCING TABLE USING ACTIVITY NUMBERS

	DRAMA	MUSIC	DANCE	CIRCUS	VISUAL ARTS
<i>TUNING IN</i>					
In the Zone	1, 35	31	17, 22, 28	4, 36	18
Self Awareness: Emotions	29	7	2	23, 19	3, 32
Self Awareness: Thoughts	16, 20	21, 30	2, 33	34	3, 6
Mindfulness	1, 35	21	17	4, 34	18, 24
Sensory Awareness	35	5, 21, 15, 11	17, 22	19	24
<i>FEELING</i>					
Coping with Criticism	29	31	10, 25	4, 23	6
Expressing Emotions	29, 26	5, 7, 31	2, 28	9, 34, 36	3, 32, 24
Managing Pressure	16, 8, 20	15, 11	25, 33	19	
Compassion	13, 26	7	25	23, 9	27, 3, 12
<i>CONNECTING</i>					
Positive Peer Comparison	13	30	10, 33	14	18, 27, 32
Listening	16, 8, 20	15, 11	28	14, 36	24, 12
Empathising	29, 26	7	2	9	6, 12
Working in Groups	13, 1, 26	5, 30	10, 28	19, 36	18, 27, 12
<i>DISCOVERING</i>					
Doing What I Value	13	31	10	14	27
Positive Body Image	35	5, 15	25	14	32
Learning from Mistakes	16, 8	11	22, 33	4, 23	
Trying Something New	1, 8, 20	21, 30	17, 22	9, 34	6

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1: Mirroring (Drama)

WBF Focus: Being in the Zone

Other WBFs: Mindfulness, Trying Something New, Working in Groups

This warm-up invites participants to tune in deeply to themselves and each other. It's designed to build trust and support the group to experience a state of flow, where body and mind act without overthinking.

Key Messages

- Give yourself time to get in the zone.
- Discover what helps you stay in the zone.
- You get in the zone when you're challenged but not overwhelmed.
- In the zone, your body and mind act without thinking.
- Focus on the process, not the result.

Activity

In pairs, stand about a meter apart facing each other, making eye contact. Imagine an invisible mirror between you. Person A begins to move slowly. Person B copies as precisely as possible - matching gestures, weight transference, facial expressions, and even breath. As confidence grows, allow movements to become more ambitious. The aim: an observer shouldn't be able to tell who is leading or following. Swap roles: B leads, A follows. Finally, remove the leader/follower roles so both people move in unison.

Tip: Expect some laughter or awkwardness at first. Encourage participants to stick with it and notice what shifts as they settle in.

Reflection Points

- Did you feel yourself getting in the zone? What helped you get there?
- What happened to your body, mind and breath as you moved?
- What movements make it easier/harder to stay in the flow?
- How did it feel like to observe your partner so closely?
- What shifted when there was no clear leader or follower?
- Were you aware of anyone else or anything else in the room?

ACTIVITY 2: Head, Heart, Body in Gesture (Dance)

WBF Focus: Self Awareness: Emotions

Other WBFs: Self Awareness: Thoughts, Empathising, Expressing Emotions.

This embodied check-in helps participants tune into their emotions, notice how they are held in the body, and explore expressing them through gesture. It works well at the start of a session to help participants settle and connect.

Key Messages

- Recognising your emotions is the first step to awareness.
- Uncomfortable emotions are hard to push away - accepting and safely releasing them helps reduce their intensity.
- labelling emotions helps you recognise them.
- Your body often knows how you feel before your mind does.

Activity

Invite participants to close their eyes and tune in to how their head, heart and body is feeling today. With eyes open, ask them to share one adjective to describe each. Poetic or unusual adjectives can be encouraged if you do this regularly, or every-day adjectives are also fantastic. For example, “my head feels swirling, my heart feels crunchy, my body feels electric” or “my head feels tired, my heart feels warm, my body feels sore”. Ask participants to create one gesture for each adjective. Combine these into a sequence of three gestures. They can: say the adjectives aloud while performing the gestures or perform the gestures silently. The group mirrors these gesture sequence back in unison (for large groups, use pairs or small groups).

Tip: Some participants may feel shy. Offer the option to keep gestures private or share in pairs.

Reflection Points

- How does it “feel” to describe how you feel?
- Was it easy or hard to label your emotions?
- What kind of gestures represented your emotions? Why?
- What happened to your breath and your body when you expressed these emotions?
- How did it feel to keep emotions inside versus sharing them?

ACTIVITY 3: Thought Collage (Visual Arts)

WBF Focus: Self Awareness: Thoughts

Other WBFs: Self Awareness: Emotions, Expressing Emotions, Compassion

This solo activity helps participants step back and observe their thoughts. By representing their inner world visually, they can explore patterns and practice separating themselves from their thoughts.

Key Messages

- Thoughts are just thoughts - just because you think something doesn't mean it's true.
- It's natural to focus on the negative, but you can practice focusing on the good too.
- Acknowledging thoughts reduces their power.
- You can step back and observe your thoughts.
- Recognise which thoughts help you become the sort of person you want to be.

Activity

Provide participants with magazines, newspapers, and other print material with words and images. Ask them to select ten pieces (words, images, scraps, colours) that represent what's happening in their mind right now. Create a paper collage with these pieces. Participants can choose:

- To be completely freeform in their approach, or
- To use parameters (e.g., colour palette, shape) as they wish.

Allow time for participants to step back, observe and reflect on their creations! If working across multiple sessions, photograph each stage. Use these to reflect on changes (or stability) in their mental state over time.

Tip: Encourage playfulness over perfection. This isn't about artistic skill - it's about tuning in and noticing. Some participants may prefer to keep their collages private.

Reflection

- What's it like to see your mind represented on a page?
- Does your mind seem busy, empty, ordered, chaotic, fluid, stagnant etc.?
- How does it feel to step back and observe your thoughts?
- Is there a balance of negative and positive on the page? If there are more negative elements, can you experiment with adding positive thoughts to your page (and mind)?
- Were there any thoughts you felt surprised or curious about?

ACTIVITY 4: Juggling (Circus)

WBF Focus: Mindfulness

Other WBFs: Coping with Criticism, Learning from Mistakes, In the Zone

This warm-up uses juggling to invite participants into the present moment. It encourages focus on breath, body, and thoughts in motion. Suitable for groups with existing juggling skills, but can also be adapted for beginners.

Key Messages

- You can be mindful while still or moving.
- When your mind wanders, gently bring it back to what you're doing.
- Mindfulness is being aware of the present moment, you can improve with practice.
- Mindfulness means noticing what's happening right now - inside you and around you.

Activity

Begin with a physical warm-up – wrist rolls, shoulder circles, and gentle arm stretches. Invite participants to notice how their body feels and take a few deep breaths. In a circle, ask participants to select the number of items they are comfortable juggling. Play music in the background to create a fun, relaxed environment. Start juggling together. The goal: juggle consistently for an appropriate length of time for the skill level (e.g., 2 mins for, or the length of one song). Encourage participants to deep breath deeply and calmly continue after each ball drop. Highlight how one ball drop can sometimes trigger more, and invite them to simply notice and reset.

Adaptations:

- Non-competitive: Don't count ball drops, focus on flow.
- Competitive: Count ball drops for those who enjoy a challenge.
- Beginners: Start with one ball, tossing it from hand to hand, focusing on smooth, even movements.

Tip: Frame this as mindfulness in motion. It's not about perfect juggling—it's about noticing your breath, body, and thoughts as you juggle.

Reflection

- What were your thoughts like while juggling - could you stay in the present moment or did your mind wander?
- How did your thoughts and emotions change if you dropped a ball?
- If your mind wandered, how did you bring it back?
- Did your focus affect your ability to juggle consistently?
- Were you aware of the other people around you? Did other people dropping balls affect you?
- How did your breath change as you juggled?

ACTIVITY 5: Soundscapes (Music)

WBF Focus: Sensory Awareness

Other WBFs: Working in Groups, Positive Body Image, Expressing Emotions

This activity immerses participants in sound, helping them tune into their senses and explore how sound can influence mood, energy, and focus. This is a highly adaptable, cross-curricular activity where the inspiration for the soundscape can come from any subject area. For example, if students are exploring the history of Egypt, you could use the prompt “Building the Pyramids”. This encourages them to imagine the scene in detail and consider what sounds might have been present, then recreate those sounds to bring their soundscape to life.

Key Messages

- Tuning into your senses can help you feel calmer,
- Connect with Country and find calm - crush gum leaves in your hands and smell their aroma, listen to the waves crashing at the shoreline, smell the salty air, watch the dance of a flickering fire, touch the earth or stand barefoot on grass.
- Listening deeply is a way to connect with yourself and the world around you.
- Sound can influence how we feel - notice which sounds bring you calm or energy.

Activity

In small groups, give participants a creative prompt (e.g., Building the Pyramids). Brainstorm all the sounds connected to the prompt: Consider landscape, animals, actions, weather, tools, and human voices. Experiment with instruments and found objects to create the sounds. Play with: Pitch, rhythm, timbre, dynamics, texture, spatial/directional sound, harmony, and form. Rehearse how you will order and layer the sounds. Think about where to place your audience for maximum effect. Perform your soundscape for the group. Option: ask the audience to close their eyes and simply listen. After performing, take a moment for quiet reflection.

Example Prompts: Factory Assembly Line, Rainforest Storm, Sailing the Open Seas, City Hustle and Bustle, Christmas in the Snow.

Tip: Some participants may be sensitive to loud or overlapping sounds. Encourage the group to explore both quiet and dynamic textures and check in on how everyone feels.

Reflection

- How did you focus on different sounds and find balance?
- How did your other senses contribute to creating the soundscape?
- How did your thoughts change (or not) when you focused on sound?
- Were any sounds calming or energising? Did any feel uncomfortable?
- How did closing your eyes change your listening experience?
- Did certain sounds produce specific feelings in your body?
- What was it like to listen closely to others while creating your soundscape?

ACTIVITY 6: The Art Critic (Visual Arts)

WBF Focus: Coping with Criticism

Other WBFs: Self Awareness: Thoughts, Trying Something New, Empathising

This lighthearted activity helps participants explore how it feels to give and receive feedback in a playful way. It's designed to reframe criticism and encourage a growth mindset about creative work.

Key Messages

- Feedback can be a chance to grow, not something to fear.
- Focus on what's helpful in what's said—even silly feedback can spark new ideas.
- When giving feedback, think about how you would like to receive it.
- Balancing positive and constructive feedback creates a path for growth.

Activity

Choose one participant to play “the art critic.” If possible, dress them up with a scarf, beret, or funny glasses to set the tone. The rest of the group presents a piece of artwork they've created. This could be:

- Something from a previous session, or
- A quick drawing created on the spot (e.g., give everyone 60 seconds to sketch a fruit bowl, a fancy lady posing, a boat, or another “classic” art subject).

The art critic strolls dramatically through the “gallery,” offering the silliest, most exaggerated harsh critiques they can think of, e.g.:

- “This apple makes my toenails sad.”
- “This drawing would make my dog cry.”
- “This boat looks like it's allergic to water.”

Rotate roles so others have a turn being the art critic. The sillier the critiques, the better - it helps take the fear out of feedback and pokes fun at the idea of “snobby” art criticism.

Tip: Check in to make sure participants are comfortable and remind them this is about fun, not serious judgement.

Reflection

- How much do we care about what other people think of us?
- When you receive criticism about something you've worked hard on, how do you feel?
- Did the silliness of this activity change how you felt about receiving feedback?
- How do you feel when you receive positive feedback?
- How did it feel to give feedback, even in a silly way? Was it easy to balance honesty and kindness?
- Whose opinion of your work matters most - yours or someone else's?

ACTIVITY 7: Composition (Music)

WBF Focus: Expressing Emotions

Other WBFs: Self Awareness: Emotions, Empathising, Compassion

This activity helps participants explore music as a creative outlet for expressing and processing emotions, while developing awareness of how emotions are communicated through sound.

Key Messages

- You don't always have to express emotions with words - music can say what words can't.
- Every emotion tells you something important about yourself or your situation.
- There are no good or bad emotions, but there are healthy and unhealthy ways to express them.

Activity

As a group, listen to a piece of music and discuss how emotion is expressed: Consider harmony, tonality, instrumentation, structure, dynamics, and tempo. Play a piece of music together (something familiar or currently being learned). First, play it without any emotion, focusing only on the notes. Then, play it again with as much emotional expression as possible.

Discuss:

- What was the difference between the two versions?
- How does it feel to listen for emotion versus expressing your own emotions through playing?

Optional extension: Invite participants to improvise a short musical phrase that expresses how they're feeling in the moment.

Tip: Share your own experience of how music helps you process emotions—it can encourage participants to be open too.

Reflection

- How do we communicate emotion in music, whether playing or listening?
- How did it feel to play music with emotion compared to without?
- Did you notice any tension and release in your body or mind?
- How do you feel after listening or playing?
- Are there particular songs you turn to when feeling certain emotions? How do they help you process what you're feeling?
- Can you apply this idea of tension and release to situations in your everyday life?

ACTIVITY 8: The Alphabet Game (Drama)

WBF Focus: Managing Pressure

Other WBFs: Learning from Mistakes, Trying Something New, Listening

This quick-thinking improv game helps participants explore how pressure affects their choices, reactions, and creativity. It's designed to build confidence, resilience, and teamwork under time constraints.

Key Messages

- Stress happens—it's a natural response to challenges.
- The goal is to stay in your 'Optimal Stress Zone,' where stress motivates without overwhelming you.
- When pressure builds, pause, breathe, and focus on what's in front of you."
- There are lots of ways to relieve stress - creative play is one of them!

Activity

In pairs, assign players a location for their scene (e.g., office, supermarket, gym, café). Players improvise a conversation where the first word of each line begins with the next letter of the alphabet. The goal: reach "Z" to finish the scene. For example:

- "A**amazing** work on this report, Jen!"
- "B**in** it. Derek just told me they're closing the whole firm down."
- "C**rikey!** That's terrible!"
- "D**on't** have to tell me. I'm still in shock."
- "E**verything** will be okay. We'll just have to find new jobs."
- "F**ind** new jobs! Are you joking? In this economy?"

Encourage silliness and creativity - funny characters and absurd scenarios make the game more enjoyable. To support players:

- Write the alphabet on a whiteboard so they can see the order.
- For tricky letters (K, X, Z), brainstorm names or words together before starting.
- Start with A-M for a warm-up round, then build up to A-Z.

Tip: If players get stuck, invite them to pause, take a breath, or even swap roles to reset. Model calm and laughter - it keeps the energy light.

Reflection

- What was easy or difficult about this game?
- How did time pressure affect your choices?
- How did your scene partner help you manage the pressure?
- Were you able to stay calm and keep going after a mistake?
- Can you think of times in life when you feel similar pressure? How might you apply some of the strategies you used here (e.g., breathing, pausing, laughing)?
- What helps you stay in your 'Optimal Stress Zone'?

ACTIVITY 9: The Sad Clown (Circus)

WBF Focus: Compassion

Other WBFs: Trying Something New, Empathising, Expression Emotions

This playful activity explores failure and compassion through a short [sad clown](#) routine. It encourages participants to approach their own mistakes with kindness and helps build empathy for others.

Key Messages

- Compassion means treating others and yourself kindly when things don't go as planned.
- Self-compassion is about noticing your feelings and responding with warmth and care - like you would for a friend.
- Collective compassion means recognising how we can support each other and understand the challenges people carry.

Activity

Optional warm-up: Have participants walk around the room and “fail” on purpose in silly ways (tripping, dropping something imaginary) to loosen up and set the tone.

Ask each participant to choose a skill they can perform confidently (e.g., juggling, balancing, spinning a plate). Invite them to invent three different ways to “fail” at the skill:

- The first fail should be small.
- The second fail a bit bigger.
- The third fail an exaggerated “epic fail” to end their routine.

Example for juggling: 1. Drop the clubs. 2. Throw one off stage and look for it in confusion. 3. Hit self gently on the head while trying to catch it.

Encourage participants to exaggerate their fails and play up their sadness to invite pity from the audience (slow sighs, drooping shoulders, sad faces). Each participant performs their clown routine. The final “fail” should be their biggest and earn a big round of applause!

Tip: Remind participants that mistakes are part of learning and can be fun to explore. Emphasise safety when performing physical “fails” and invite participants to choose fails they're comfortable with.

Reflection

- Why do we find the sad clown so engaging?
- What does it mean to “perform” failure?
- Why do we feel compassion for the sad clown?
- How did it feel to laugh at your own failures? Could you show yourself kindness while performing?
- How can you bring more self-compassion into your life when things don't go as planned?

ACTIVITY 10: Sequencing (Dance)

WBF Focus: Positive Peer Comparison

Other WBFs: Doing Something I Value, Coping with Criticism, Working in Groups

This activity encourages participants to notice and appreciate their peers' strengths while sharing their own creative ideas. It helps frame comparison as inspiration rather than competition.

Key Messages

- Comparing yourself to others is natural and helps us learn and adapt.
- How you evaluate yourself can change in response to stress or competition.
- We often compare ourselves to those we think are better even if it hurts our wellbeing.
- Too much comparison can affect wellbeing.
Self-comparison and setting personal goals are healthier than constantly comparing yourself to others.

Activity

Optional warm-up: Start with each participant teaching a simple gesture or step to get comfortable with sharing and learning.

Give each dancer one inspiring word to create 8 counts of choreography. Examples: struggle, gasp, fall, climb, fly. Allow a short time for individual devising. Encourage participants to keep it simple so they can teach it to others. One by one, participants teach their sequence to the group until everyone knows all the sequences. Together, decide on an order for the sequences. Rehearse as a group and make minor adjustments to improve flow. Perform the full group choreography.

Tip: Encourage participants to notice what they admire in each other's choreography and to share these observations aloud. Frame comparison as an opportunity for inspiration, not competition.

Reflection

- Did you enjoy creating your 8 counts?
- What did you notice or admire about your collaborators' sequences?
- Did watching others give you new ideas or push you to try something different?
- What does it feel like to embody someone else's work?
- How did you make decisions as a group about order and flow?
- How did it feel to share your work with the group?
- Were there moments where sequences didn't quite work? How did you adjust?

ACTIVITY 11: Instrument Bingo (Music)

WBF Focus: Listening

Other WBFs: Managing Pressure, Sensory Awareness, Learning from Mistakes

This listening game helps participants identify musical instruments aurally and reflect on how listening deeply can improve focus and connection in relationships.

Key Messages

- Listening deeply helps you connect with others and makes them feel valued.
- Active listening means staying present and noticing both words and emotions.
- Listening well is a skill you can practice - it takes focus and curiosity.

Activity

Choose a piece of music with a variety of instruments (e.g., [Benjamin Britten's Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra](#)). Give each participant a bingo card filled with instrument names. Participants can create their own cards by guessing which instruments might appear in the piece (you might give them clues such as the year or country of composition). As the music plays, participants listen carefully and cross off any instruments they hear. The first player to complete a full row or column calls out "Bingo!" and wins. *An example bingo card:*

Voice	Harpsichord	Tambourine	Cello
Trombone	Sitar	Lute	Piccolo
Timpani	Pipa	Alto Saxophone	Triangle
Clarinet	Baritone Saxophone	Double Bass	Oboe

Warm-up idea: Play a short sound clip and ask participants to name as many instruments as they can.
Optional variations:

- To increase difficulty, only allow instruments playing the melody line to count.
- For younger participants, use images of instruments instead of names.

Tip: Connect this game to relationship skills by asking, "How does it feel when someone really listens to you? How can we show others we're listening?"

Reflection

- What helped you listen deeply during this activity?
- Were there any environmental distractions that made it harder to listen?
- What surprised you about the instruments you heard?
- How did you identify the timbre of different instruments?
- How might you apply this kind of focused listening when a friend is sharing something important?
- How do you feel when relying mainly on your hearing over other senses?

ACTIVITY 12: Famous Painters (Visual Arts)

WBF Focus: Empathising

Other WBFs: Compassion, Working in Groups, Listening

This activity encourages participants to step into an artist's shoes and consider how their emotions, experiences, and context shaped their work. It fosters empathy for others while deepening understanding of the relationship between art and life.

Key Messages

- Empathy means imagining how someone else might be feeling in their situation.
- It helps us connect deeply with others, build trust, and handle conflict more calmly.
- Empathy even benefits your own wellbeing - it can release oxytocin, which boosts energy and relieves stress.

Activity

Divide participants into small groups. Give each group a famous artwork and its artist to explore. Ask them to research:

- The artist's personal and professional life.
- The social, political, and cultural context in which they lived.

Each group develops an analysis of the artwork, discussing:

- How the artist's context may have shaped their work.
- How they might feel if they lived in similar circumstances.

Groups present their findings and reflections to the class.

Optional Creative Extension: After their analysis, participants create a small sketch or poster inspired by the artist's style to express what they've learned.

Tip: Choose artists whose life stories have clear connections to their art (e.g., Frida Kahlo's physical pain and vibrant self-portraits, or Banksy's social commentary). Be prepared to support participants if discussions bring up strong feelings.

Reflection

- Do you get a sense of how this artist might have felt, based on their work?
- How do emotions and life experiences influence the art we create?
- Can you link other art or behaviours you've seen to someone's lived experience?
- As a viewer, do you feel the artist's emotions when looking at their work?
- How might understanding your own context help you notice why you create in certain ways?

ACTIVITY 13: Sensory Tableaux (Drama)

WBF Focus: Working in Groups

Other WBFs: Compassion, Doing What I Value, Positive Peer Comparison

This activity helps participants work creatively in groups while exploring sensory language and storytelling. It promotes collaboration, role-sharing, and valuing others' ideas.

Key Messages

- We thrive in groups when everyone listens and contributes.
- We often fall into certain group roles—trying new roles helps you grow.
- Collaboration means balancing your ideas with others to create something bigger than what you could do alone.

Activity

Divide participants into small groups (3–5 people). Give each group a stimulus to inspire their work. This could be an object (e.g., a feather, an old shoe, a shell), a photograph or image, a song or piece of music. **As a group**, brainstorm five sensory sentences inspired by the stimulus:

“I/we see...” “I/we hear...” “I/we smell...” “I/we taste...” “I/we feel...”

Encourage literal or abstract responses. For example, if the stimulus is a Taylor Swift song, the group could write: “I see the sequins shining, I hear the guitar start to play, I smell teen spirit, I taste the sweat of one hundred thousand bodies crammed into the stadium, I feel alive!”

Participants create tableaux (frozen pictures) for each sentence. Pay attention to how you use space and composition, body language and facial expressions, tension and points of focus. Rehearse transitioning in between the five frozen images. You can add small movement or sound to connect them together. Share your sequence with the whole group.

Optional warm-up: Play a quick “group freeze-frame” game where the whole class creates a shape or scene (e.g., “a busy market” or “a thunderstorm”) in 5 seconds.

Tip: Encourage participants to notice who in their group is facilitating, summarising, recording, or encouraging others—and try swapping roles for variety.

Reflection

- How did your group work together?
- What role(s) did you naturally take on (action, thinking, social)? Were you comfortable in this role?
- What do you admire about your group members' ideas?
- What did you have to compromise on? Was the work better because of these compromises?
- Did the overall piece feel greater than what you could have created alone?
- How easy or challenging was it to generate ideas as a group?
- What's one role you might like to try more often in future group work?

ACTIVITY 14: Teaching Tumbling (Circus)

WBF Focus: Doing What I Value

Other WBFs: Positive Body Image, Positive Peer Comparison, Listening

This floor-based activity invites participants to explore their strengths and share them with others. It reinforces the idea of aligning your actions with your personal values and celebrating what feels meaningful to you.

Key Messages

- A value is something important to you, not something you do just because someone else wants you to.
- Values aren't the same as goals—they're like a compass pointing you in a meaningful direction.
- When you act in line with your values, it can feel rewarding and energising.

Activity

Begin with a short warm-up: gentle stretching or simple tumbling drills (e.g., forward rolls, balances) to prepare the body. Give participants 5 minutes to create a tumbling sequence that plays to their strengths:

- Start with easy skills.
- End with their most confident or impressive skill.
- Encourage participants to focus on what they enjoy, rather than what looks the hardest.

Each participant teaches their routine to the group:

- Include tips for technique, transitions, rhythm, and performance.
- Allow them to select their own music if time permits.

Celebrate each routine with group applause and positive peer feedback.

Tip: Encourage participants to be supportive audience members when others are teaching. Highlight the value of learning from each other's different styles and strengths.

Reflection

- Why did you choose the skills you chose?
- What do you enjoy about the skills (and music) you chose -how do they make you feel?
- How does it feel to share what you're good at with others?
- How was it to explain and teach your skills to the group?
- Did you notice others taking a different approach? How did that feel to observe?
- What other activities in your life feel meaningful because they reflect your values?

ACTIVITY 15: Body Percussion (Music)

WBF Focus: Positive Body Image

Other WBFs: Sensory Awareness, Managing Pressure, Listening

This rhythmic warm-up invites participants to explore the unique sounds their bodies can make. It encourages them to celebrate their bodies' creativity and capability.

Key Messages

- Your body is amazing - not because of how it looks, but because of what it can do.
- Focusing on what your body can do helps you feel stronger, more confident, and proud.
- Your differences give you style and personality - your body is one of a kind!

Activity

Stand in a circle. The facilitator leads the first round: create four counts of body percussion (e.g., clap, stomp, pat chest, click fingers) and the group repeats it back in unison. Continue around the circle. Each participant leads four counts of their own body percussion, which the group repeats.

- Encourage creativity: use any part of the body that creates a sound.
- For hesitant participants, suggest simple rhythms like four claps or pats.

Keep a steady tempo so there's no break between each call and response.

Tip: Remind participants that all sounds are welcome. Model and celebrate even simple or quiet contributions to build confidence.

Reflection

- Our bodies are amazing - they can create sound and rhythm! How do you feel when your rhythm is repeated back to you?
- Why is it so satisfying when we make sounds in time, in unison?
- Did anyone create a sound you hadn't thought of before? What does that tell us about how unique our bodies are?
- Are there other ways your body helps you make music that you're proud of? (e.g., lungs for singing, strong arms for drumming, fingers for playing instruments).

ACTIVITY 16: Sevens (Drama)

WBF Focus: Learning from Mistakes

Other WBFs: Self-Awareness: Thoughts, Listening, Managing Pressure.

This energetic warm-up connects brain and body while helping participants embrace mistakes as part of the learning process.

Key Messages

- We learn to be creative by embracing mistakes.
- Mistakes are opportunities to learn and grow.
- Practice self-compassion when dealing with a mistake.
- Think about what the mistake can teach you to move forward and grow!

Activity

Stand in a circle. Start with an easy warm-up: count one to seven (no tapping yet). Add tapping: as you say your number, tap your shoulder in the direction the count is going. For example, if you say “1” and tap your right shoulder, the person on your right says “2” and taps their shoulder in the same way. At any time, a player can change direction by tapping the *other* shoulder.

Level up: Once you can count from one to seven as a group, repeat the activity with the first seven letters of the alphabet, and then with the days of the week. Once you’ve done this, you can then try counting by mixing up all three systems. For example, as a group you could count “1, Tuesday, 3, D, E, Saturday, 7.”

Tip: Model laughing off your own mistakes. Use affirming phrases like “Nice mistake - now we get to practise!” to normalise errors.

Reflection

- Mistakes are inevitable and should be supported and encouraged! How does it feel to be on a roll as a group?
- How does it feel to make a mistake?
- What do you say to yourself in your head when you mess up?
- How do you feel when someone else in the group messes up?
- What is the benefit of a mistake? Do you notice an improvement after making one?
- What strategies did you (or the group) develop as you learnt from mistakes?

ACTIVITY 17: Push Hands (Dance)

WBF Focus: Doing Something New

Other WBFs: Mindfulness, Being in the Zone, Sensory Awareness

This partner exercise from [Frantic Assembly](#) builds trust, spatial awareness, and confidence in trying something new. It encourages participants to step out of their comfort zone in a safe and supportive way.

Key Messages

- Trying new things helps you learn about yourself and shape who you'll become.
- Change is a natural part of life, and experimenting can help you discover what aligns with your values.

Activity

Pair up - find a partner. If there's an odd number, one person can observe and swap in later.

Connect: Stand facing each other, about a meter apart. Make eye contact and take a deep breath in and out together to create a sense of connection.

Establish contact:

- The Leader extends a hand towards the Follower.
- The Follower places their hand under the Leader's, palm facing up.
- Apply gentle opposing pressure (Leader pushes slightly down; Follower pushes slightly up) to create a strong, connected point of contact.
- Take another deep breath in and out together, maintaining eye contact.

Movement:

- The Leader begins moving slowly around the room, guiding the Follower using the pressure of the hand connection.
- Explore different directions, speeds, and levels (high, low, twisting, etc.).
- Encourage playfulness and mindfulness of each other's pace and comfort.

Swap roles so the Follower becomes the Leader. **Optional challenge:** Repeat the exercise with the Follower closing their eyes, focusing on non-visual senses and deepening trust.

Tip: Model the exercise first to demonstrate gentle pressure and clear communication.

Check in with participants about comfort levels and remind them to speak up if they want to pause or adjust. Encourage pairs to keep their feet soft and grounded, moving fluidly rather than rigidly.

Reflection

- How did it feel to trust your partner?
- What helped you feel safe?
- What happened to your breath and body when you took a risk or tried something new?
- How did it feel to be responsible for your partner's safety?
- What was the difference between having your eyes open and eyes closed?
- If you felt nervous, how did you deal with that?
- Can you remember another time you were scared to try something new but did it anyway? How did it feel afterwards?

ACTIVITY 18: Line Drawing Round Robin (Visual Arts)

WBF Focus: In the Zone

Other WBFs: Mindfulness, Working in Groups, Positive Peer Comparison

This group drawing activity encourages freedom of expression and helps participants slip into a “flow” state by removing pressure to create a perfect finished product. It’s playful, calming, and fosters connection between group members.

Key Messages

- You get ‘in the zone’ when you’re focused on the process, not worrying about the result.
- Being in the zone happens when you’re challenged but not overwhelmed—it feels like your body and mind are working together without overthinking.
- Give yourself time to get in the zone and notice what helps you stay there.

Activity

Give each participant a sheet of paper and a pen or pencil. Set a short timer (10–30 seconds works well, depending on group size). In this time, each person begins a line drawing—a drawing created using one continuous line without lifting the pen from the paper. When the timer ends, everyone passes their drawing to the person on their right and receives a new drawing from the person on their left. Reset the timer and add to the new drawing in front of you. Encourage participants to flow with their ideas and not overthink. Repeat for as many rounds as you like. For maximum satisfaction, aim for as many rounds as there are people in the group, so that participants receive back the piece they started

Optional variations:

- Give a theme (e.g. “friendship”, “community”, “nature”).
- Play different genres of background music and notice how it influences the mood of the drawings.
- Allow participants to decide whether the drawings stay abstract or form cohesive scenes.

Tip: Remind participants that the focus is not on “good” drawing skills but on creativity and collaboration. You might say: “Your lines don’t have to make sense or even look like anything - just keep your pen moving and enjoy the process.”

Reflection

- What were you thinking while you were drawing?
- How did you feel emotionally and physically during this activity?
- Did you feel like your brain was “on” or “off”?
- How did the time limit affect you—did it help you focus or create pressure?
- Could you focus on the process rather than worrying about having a “good” drawing?
- What do you love about your piece? What do you love about your group members’ ideas?
- Are the final drawings as you expected, or are they different?

ACTIVITY 19: Head, Heart, Body in Movement (Circus)

WBF Focus: Self Awareness: Emotions

Other WBFs: Working in Groups, Sensory Awareness, Managing Pressure

this check-in activity helps participants notice and express their emotions physically. It supports emotional literacy and creates an embodied understanding of how feelings live in the body.

Key Messages

- Recognising your emotions is the first step to awareness.
- Uncomfortable emotions are hard to push away - accepting them reduces their intensity.
- Labelling emotions helps you recognise them.
- Focusing on how emotions feel in your body can help manage them.
- Emotional health includes being aware of your emotions and being able to regulate them.

Activity

In small groups, invite participants to close their eyes and take a few deep breaths.

Prompt them to tune in:

- “How does your head feel today - busy, calm, heavy, light?”
- “How does your heart feel - open, tight, warm, cool?”
- “How does your body feel - tense, relaxed, tired, energised?”

When ready, they open their eyes. One participant steps into the centre of the circle and creates a short sequence of three movements to represent how their head, heart, and body feel. These movements can be literal or abstract. The group observes, then repeats the gesture sequence back in unison. Continue until each participant has had a turn in the centre (or for larger groups, work in smaller circles or pairs to allow everyone space to share).

Tip: If participants seem shy, consider starting in pairs or have participants “mirror” someone’s movement first to build confidence before sharing solo.

Reflection

- How does it feel to embody your emotions?
- Are your head, heart, and body aligned today or do they feel separate?
- What kinds of movements naturally expressed your feelings (pace, weight, shape)?
- How does your breath and body change when you feel positive or negative emotions?
- How does it feel to keep emotions in your head versus sharing them and expressing them through your body?
- Was it easy or hard to label your emotions?

ACTIVITY 20: What Are You Doing? (Drama)

WBF Focus: Self Awareness: Thoughts

Managing Pressure, Listening, Trying Something New

This improvisation game helps participants notice and challenge unhelpful thought patterns while developing quick thinking, confidence, and creativity.

Key Messages

- Thoughts are just thoughts – they don't always reflect reality.
- It's natural to focus on the negative but it takes practice to focus on the good.
- Acknowledging thoughts reduces their power.
- You can step back and observe your thoughts.
- Recognise which thoughts help you become the sort of person you want to be.

Activity

Everyone forms a circle, standing up. One person steps into the centre and begins acting out any action of their choice (e.g., brushing their hair, robbing a bank, climbing a ladder). After 5–10 seconds, the next person enters the circle and asks: "What are you doing?" The person doing the action must reply with anything except the action they're currently performing. Example: If they are brushing their hair, they might reply: "Swimming at the beach." The person who asked, "What are you doing?" now takes over and acts out the new suggestion (swimming at the beach), while the first actor returns to the outside of the circle. The next participant steps in, asks "What are you doing?", and the cycle continues.

Variation Options:

- Encourage sound effects or dialogue to increase energy and expressiveness.
- Add an emotion or intention to the question "What are you doing?" (e.g., curious, angry, excited) to explore how tone changes meaning.
- Play silently for an extra mindfulness challenge, using only gestures and facial expressions.

Reflection

- What were you thinking while playing this game?
- Did you try to pre-plan your suggestions? Why or why not?
- What's the benefit or challenge of planning ahead versus letting improvisation happen in the moment?
- Did you notice any judgemental thoughts about your own ideas?
- Were you more critical of yourself than of others? Why do you think that is?
- What helped you step back and observe your thoughts without judgement during the activity?

ACTIVITY 21: Mindful Music (Music)

WBF Focus: Mindfulness

This Other WBFs: Sensory Awareness, Self Awareness: Thoughts, Trying Something New.

This warm-up or cool-down activity helps participants slow down, tune into the present moment, and engage with sound in a non-judgemental way.

Key Messages

- Mindfulness can be practiced whilst being still or moving, and it improves with practice.
- When your mind wanders (which it will) you can gently bring your focus back without judgement.
- Mindfulness means being aware of the present moment – noticing what your mind and body are doing as well as what's happening around you.

Activity

Invite one participant to choose and play an instrument (this can include found instruments like cardboard boxes, pots, or pans if traditional instruments aren't available). They play their instrument as they wish. As they play freely, the rest of the group listens. Encourage them to focus deeply on one or more Elements of Music: Harmony, Timbre, Dynamics, Duration, Rhythm, Pitch. Ask listeners to resist the urge to judge, analyse, or think about what others might think. Instead, they should simply observe and notice any thoughts or feelings that arise (e.g., Do certain sounds feel calming? Jarring? Neutral?). Repeating this exercise can be used as part of a mindfulness practice, and gives others a chance to play rather than just listen. This activity can be adjusted for group size with participants playing sounds one at a time for the larger groups, or in smaller groups with break out spaces.

Reflection

- What was it like to play without having something specific to play?
- Which sounds made you feel calm, tense, curious, or something else?
- What happened to your mind when you focused only on sound?
- How does focusing on sound change your awareness of your other senses?
- How do you feel after completing this exercise? What thoughts came up?

ACTIVITY 22: Sightless Disco (Dance)

WBF Focus: Sensory Awareness

Other WBFs: Learning from Mistakes, Trying Something New, In the Zone

This energising warm-up or cool-down encourages freedom of movement, builds confidence, and strengthens trust in yourself and others.

Key Messages

- Tuning into your senses can give your mind a break and help you feel calmer,
- Use your senses to connect with Country and find calm - crush gum leaves in your hands and smell their aroma, listen to the waves crashing at the shoreline, smell the salty air, watch the dance of a flickering fire, touch the earth or stand barefoot on grass.

Activity

Choose a song - it must be a BANGER (high energy and upbeat!). Participants spread out in the space so they have enough room to wave their arms without touching anyone, and close their eyes. Everyone takes a few centering breaths together, inhaling and exhaling. Then, as the music starts, participants start to move and dance as they please, starting with small movements that stay on the spot, building up to more ambitious movements that travel when the group is comfortable. The facilitator should have eyes open at all times, and use the command "PAUSE" in a strong, neutral (non-panicked!) voice if there is to be any collision. Allow participants to experiment with moving freely through the space, responding to the music, and navigating where others might be in the space.

Reflection

- How did it feel to move with your eyes closed? Was it scary at first? Did it get easier?
- How would the experience change with eyes open?
- What's it like knowing nobody can see you? Did it make you feel more or less free?
- Did you rely on your other senses (hearing, touch, intuition) to move safely?
- How do you feel now in your body and mind compared to before the activity?

ACTIVITY 23: Skill Swap (Circus)

WBF Focus: Coping with Criticism

Other WBFs: Compassion, Self Awareness: Emotions, Learning from Mistakes

This is an activity for pairs of groups of 3, designed to bring skills up to scratch across a group with different strengths.

Key Messages

- Try to see feedback as an opportunity to improve.
- Focusing on what was said that can help you grow, think about how you would like to receive feedback when you're giving it to others.
- positive feedback alongside criticisms can provide a productive path to growth.

Activity

Arrange participants in pairs or small groups with different strong skills. Each person identifies the weak skill they wish to improve and performs it for the rest of the group. The person/people watching analyse the skill and where it requires improvement. Emphasis should be on delivering constructive feedback, not destructive criticism. This includes identifying something that can be improved, giving helpful tips, and positive reinforcement when those tips are implemented. After one person has had the opportunity to improve a skill, swap over. This activity allows participants to develop critical thinking skills, good communication skills, and improve circus skills.

Reflection

- How did it feel to receive feedback from your peers?
- How did it feel to give feedback? Was it harder or easier than you thought?
- What makes feedback feel kind and helpful rather than harsh?
- How can we remind ourselves that criticism is about improving a skill, not about who we are as a person?
- What thoughts helped you keep trying even if you felt frustrated or unsure?
- Can you think of a time when feedback helped you succeed in the past?

ACTIVITY 24: Colours of the Week (Visual Arts)

WBF Focus: Expressing Emotions

Other WBFs: Sensory Awareness, Mindfulness, Listening

This activity uses colour as a creative outlet to help participants explore and express their emotions in a non-verbal way. It can be adapted to suit different art mediums, though materials with rich, vibrant colours work best.

Key Messages

- You don't always need words to express how you feel - the arts can be a powerful way to process emotions.
- Emotions are a natural and important part of being human. They tell you something valuable about yourself or your situation.
- There are no good or bad emotions, but there are healthy and unhealthy ways of expressing them.
- Acting as if you feel a certain way can sometimes help shift your emotions - 'fake it till you make it' really works.

Activity

In a full group or smaller breakout groups, ask participants to close their eyes. Prompt them to reflect on their week so far and come up with:

- A single word or an abstract sound that describes how they feel.
- Encourage them to go beyond words like "fine" or "okay" and to dig a little deeper into the emotional "vibe" of their week.

Once they've shared their emotion aloud, ask them to select a colour that best represents this feeling. Point out how colours can hold different meanings for different people (e.g., blue might feel peaceful for one person and sad for another). Using their chosen colour as a dominant element, participants create an artwork that expresses the emotion of their week. This could be abstract or figurative, depending on their preference.

Reflection

- Was it easy or hard to identify your emotions? Why?
- Outside of art, how do you usually express how you feel?
- How did it feel to translate your emotions into colour and artwork?
- Does your finished piece feel like an accurate reflection of your inner world?
- How did it feel to listen to others describe their emotions?
- Did you notice changes in your body (breath, tension, energy) during or after creating your art?

ACTIVITY 25: Battle Dance (Dance)

WBF Focus: Managing Pressure

Other WBFs: Positive Body Image, Compassion, Coping with Criticism

This dance activity invites participants to channel stress into creative expression, transforming pressure into movement. It can be framed as a fun, light-hearted challenge or as a more reflective and serious exercise, depending on the group's needs.

Key Messages

- Stress happens – it's natural!
- The key is learning to stay in the 'Optimal Stress Zone', where challenges motivate us without being overwhelming.
- There are many strategies to relieve stress - find what works best for you: breathing exercises, creative activities, talking with someone, being in nature and connecting to Country.

Activity

As a group, discuss some of the things that make people feel stressed or overwhelmed, with as much or as little detail as suits the group. For example, homework deadlines, siblings, parental stress, catching the bus, etc. Then discuss any strategies participants might already use to manage pressure and feel a sense of calm. In small groups, participants develop a sequence of movements that represent a handful of these stressors, and a sequence of movements that dispels them. Participants should be encouraged to focus on breath with movement, particularly long exhales of breath for the movements that represent the dispelling of tension and stress. Participants can be encouraged to perform these dances with an opening "battle cry" which can be serious or silly. A good example could be "Look at what our bodies can do! Rah!" Participants could select their own music to perform to, or be given a track.

Reflection

- How does your body tell you when you're feeling stressed?
- Did you notice any changes in your body after creating or performing your dance?
- Can movement and breath become regular tools for managing stress?
- Did you notice stress showing up in other people's bodies?
- What strategies do you use that help you come back to calm? Could you try something new from what was shared today?

ACTIVITY 26: Reenacting the News (Drama)

WBF Focus: Compassion

Other WBFs: Empathising, Working in Groups, Expressing Emotions

This devising drama activity invites participants to creatively explore current news stories, encouraging empathy and compassion through role-play. It can be approached in a light-hearted or serious way, depending on the group's maturity and interests.

Key Messages

- Compassion means treating others and yourself kindly when things don't go well.
- self-compassion is about being aware of your feelings and treating yourself with warmth, care and understanding – just as you would a friend.
- Collective compassion is about recognising intergenerational, historical and ongoing trauma caused by systemic oppression such as racism and sexism.

Activity

Divide participants into small groups. Assign each group a current news headline (examples: "Foxes decimate turtle population in Beeliar Wetlands", "Plane Makes Emergency Landing in Sydney"). Headlines can be chosen to suit the group's age and sensitivity - political, environmental, uplifting, or somber. The group must decide who is the protagonist of the story, and devise a short scene inspired by the headline. These scenes can be performed for the rest of the group after some rehearsal time has been given. Groups perform their scenes for the whole group.

Reflection

- How did your group decide on the protagonist?
- Who did you feel compassion for in the story, and why?
- Why is it important to understand and respect other people's experiences?
- How can language and actions in your scene show compassion?

ACTIVITY 27: Collaboration Masterpiece (Visual Arts)

WBF Focus: Positive Peer Comparison

Other WBFs: Working in Groups, Compassion, Doing What I Value

This activity involves small groups working collaboratively to create a single piece of art. The materials and medium can vary according to available resources and participant preferences. Groups may work from a given theme such as “love” or “justice,” or choose their own concept.

Key Messages

- Comparing yourself to others is natural and helps us learn and adapt,
- How you evaluate yourself can change in response to stress or competition,
- We often compare ourselves to those we think are better even if it hurts our wellbeing,
- Too much comparison can affect wellbeing,
- Self-comparison and setting personal goals is healthier than constantly comparing yourself to others.

Activity

In small groups, each participant identifies a personal strength, for example:

- “I’m great at line drawing.”
- “I’m good at generating creative ideas.”
- “I’m skilled at planning and organising.”

If someone struggles to identify a strength, encourage other group members to offer positive suggestions.

Once all participants have shared their strengths, the group collaborates to develop one unified visual art piece that incorporates or reflects these strengths.

Reflection

- How did it feel to identify and share what you’re good at?
- What was it like to hear others say what they think you’re good at?
- Why is it important for groups to have diverse strengths and weaknesses?
- How do you feel when comparing yourself to others?
- Could you have created this piece alone, or was the group essential?
- How did your group communicate and negotiate ideas during the creative process?

ACTIVITY 28: Round-by-Through (Dance)

WBF Focus: Listening

Other WBFs: Working in Groups, In the Zone, Expressing Emotions

This movement-based exercise, inspired by [Frantic Assembly](#), focuses on using physical communication to express emotions, plot, and theme, while fostering deep active listening between partners.

Key Messages

- Active listening helps you build trust and connect to and understand others,
- it improves others' well being by making them feel valued, it is present and focused on the other person.
- Listening involves picking up on the emotions of the person who is speaking, staying neutral, and reflecting on what you hear and using nonverbal signals (body language) to show you are truly listening.

Activity

Pair up participants. Partners take turns improvising movements based on a sequence of three actions:

- *Round*, Person A moves around Person B's body.
- *By*, Person B moves to be parallel with Person A.
- *Through*, Person A moves through Person B's space (usually using upper body and arms).

This repeats, with B making the first movement (*round*), A making the second movement (*by*), and B making the third movement (*through*). This can then repeat as many times as required. This exercise can be completely reactive with no prompt to guide the movement, only the partners listening and responding. This can also be done with a particular theme, story, or emotion in mind. For example, the first sequence or three movements could be "fear", the second three "anger", the third three "love". Or you could create multiple sequences around "fear", depending on what suits your group. This technique can be used to choreograph, or simply to warm up and encourage free movement within specific parameters. Eye contact can help, and partners should be encouraged to discuss consent before beginning the activity - i.e. are there parts of the body they do **not** want to be touched.

Reflection

- How do you decide what movements to make in the moment?
- Can you turn off your internal dialogue and just respond intuitively to your partner?
- Did your partner's movements surprise you? How did that feel?
- What kinds of movements best communicate certain emotions or themes?
- How do you "listen" without words? What do you notice—breath, eye contact, weight shifts, rhythm?

ACTIVITY 29: Loserball (Drama)

WBF Focus: Empathising

Other WBFs: Self-Awareness: Emotions, Expressing Emotions, Coping with Criticism.

This warm-up game encourages players to embrace “failure” with humor and imagination, while supporting and hyping each other up.

Key Messages

- Empathy begins with understanding others’ perspectives, which boosts self-esteem and gratitude.
- Empathy reduces envy, improves conflict resolution, builds trust, and supports good decision-making.
- Connecting empathetically with others releases oxytocin, increasing energy and reducing stress.

Activity

Participants stand in a circle. The first player throws a ball of energy across the circle, making eye contact with the person they’re throwing to. As melodramatic and silly as possible. The person trying to catch the energy ball must mime dropping the ball. Once they’ve dropped it, they take a bow and everyone else applauds and hypes them up! Make this as silly and exaggerated as you like! The person who has just dropped the ball then throws the ball to the next person, who drops it, and bows as they are applauded...and so on and so forth.

Reflection

- There are no winners or losers - it’s a team effort. How does it feel to watch someone else “drop the ball” compared to when you do?
- What is it like to encourage and hype others up?
- How does it feel to “fail” in this playful context? How is that different from how you usually experience failure?
- How does supporting others in their “failures” affect your connection with them?

ACTIVITY 30: The Boy/Girl Band Challenge (Music)

WBF Focus: Working in Groups

Other WBFs: Positive Peer Comparison, Trying Something New, Self Awareness: Thoughts

This singing exercise is designed to encourage participants' confidence and sense of fun using their voice.

Key Messages

- People thrive in groups when everyone respects each other.
- Reflecting on the group dynamic can improve functioning.
- We naturally fall into specific roles in a group such as facilitator, summariser, recorder, or presenter - trying new roles helps you grow.

Activity

In groups of 4 or 5, select a famous song from a boy/girl band of choice. If participants are skilled musicians, they can be encouraged to learn the song to play as well as sing. Or, if it is easier, use Youtube karaoke tracks. Each group must work together to divide up verse lines, choruses, add harmonies if appropriate, and decide how they will present the song. Participants should be encouraged to wear costume and makeup to fully embody the boy/girl band experience, and to be as silly and exaggerated as they wish for the performance.

Reflection

- How was it working as a group? Did people take on particular roles?
- How did you make decisions together?
- What were the group's strengths and weaknesses?
- What kinds of thoughts did you have while performing?
- Were you able to step back and observe your thoughts, or did they take over?

ACTIVITY 31: Solo Composition (Music)

WBF Focus: Doing What I Value

Other WBFs: Coping with Criticism, In the Zone, Expressing Emotions

This solo composition task helps participants deepen their understanding of musical elements while building confidence in creating and performing their own original pieces.

Key Messages

- A value is something you do because it is important to you, not because someone else wants you to do it,
- Values are not the same as goals, values keep you heading in a direction that is meaningful for you.

Activity

Participants are given a set amount of time to compose a solo piece which they then present to the rest of the group. Parameters can be set according to assessment requirements or related course content. For example, participants might have to include a certain structure, instrument, harmonic progression, style of music, etc. This task could also be completed with composition software (like Garage Band or Sibelius) or without. Constructive feedback from peers should be encouraged after each performance.

Reflection

- What matters most to you in your musical expression?
- What values do you hold as a musician?
- How do you approach songwriting or composition?
- How do you approach other areas of your life that you value?
- What is it like to receive feedback on something you've created?

ACTIVITY 32: Self Portraits (Visual Arts)

WBF Focus: Positive Body Image

Other WBFs: Positive Peer Comparison, Expressing Emotions, Self Awareness: Emotions

This adaptable visual arts activity encourages participants to explore and celebrate their unique bodies and inner qualities through self-portraiture, fostering a positive body image and emotional expression.

Key Messages

- Bodies are remarkable in what they can do, and focusing on these abilities rather than appearance can improve body image.
- True beauty stems from inner qualities and self-expression.
- Each body is unique, with differences that add personality and style.

Activity

Participants bring a photo of themselves that they feel proud of or like how they look in. If this is difficult, a photo from a younger age can be used. Using a chosen medium (drawing, painting, collage, sculpture, etc.), they create a self-portrait inspired by the photo within a set time. After completing their artwork, participants write down three things they like about their own piece. Then, they swap artworks with a peer and write three compliments on their friend's work for them to read later.

Reflection

- How does it feel to receive compliments from others?
- How do you see yourself in your mind's eye?
- What is it like to express your self-image artistically?
- Do you think your artwork represents how you truly see yourself, or how you feel about yourself? What's the difference between those two?

ACTIVITY 33: Speed Choreography Challenge (Dance)

WBF Focus: Learning from Mistakes

Other WBFs: Self Awareness: Thoughts, Managing Pressure, Positive Peer Comparison

This dance and movement activity encourages participants to embrace mistakes as valuable learning opportunities while building confidence and resilience under pressure.

Key Messages

- We learn to be creative by embracing mistakes.
- Mistakes are opportunities to learn and grow.
- Practice self-compassion when dealing with a mistake.
- Think about what the mistake can teach you to move forward and grow!

Activity

The facilitator demonstrates 16 counts of choreography slightly above participants' current skill level. Small groups attempt to repeat the sequence immediately, without prior practice. After each attempt, the facilitator shows the choreography again, and groups perform again. This cycle continues until all groups have learned the choreography. Finally, the entire group performs the sequence together. Spectators are encouraged to cheer and support all groups enthusiastically, regardless of mistakes.

Reflection

- Why is making mistakes important in learning?
- Did you learn anything from watching other groups' mistakes?
- What thoughts arise after making a mistake, and how can you use those thoughts constructively?
- How does it feel to be cheered on, even when your performance isn't perfect?
- Can making mistakes be fun, especially without preparation?
- How might embracing mistakes in this way apply to other parts of your life?

ACTIVITY 34: Silks Drop (Circus)

WBF Focus: Trying Something New

Other WBFs: Self Awareness: Thoughts, Expressing Emotions, Mindfulness

This aerial silks activity challenges participants to learn a new skill involving a drop, encouraging courage, mindfulness, and self-awareness. The core principle can be adapted to learning any new apparatus skill.

Key Messages

- Change is a natural part of life and trying new things and building strengths helps you to learn about yourself and shape who you'll become.
- When trying new things, consider whether they expand your life and align with your values.

Activity

Participants are taught a new aerial silks sequence that includes a drop they haven't done before, performed at a height they feel just comfortable with. They learn the sequence step-by-step, practicing and making mistakes as part of the process. Once ready, they demonstrate the sequence to the group. Other participants are encouraged to cheer enthusiastically, especially during the drop.

Reflection

- How does it feel to try something new?
- What emotions do you experience when facing new challenges?
- How do your breath and body react to feelings like fear, nervousness, or anticipation?
- What strategies can you use to calm your mind and body and keep going?
- How does it feel to accomplish something new?
- Thinking about your future goals, what new things can you try to help you get there?

ACTIVITY 35: Linklater Balloon (Drama)

WBF Focus: Sensory Awareness

Other WBFs: In the Zone, Mindfulness, Positive Body Image

A breath and voice warm-up adapted from [Kristin Linklater](#), designed to release physical tension and develop vocal resonance while enhancing sensory awareness and mindfulness.

Key Messages

- Tuning into your senses can give your mind a break and help you feel calmer,
- Use your senses to connect with Country and find calm - crush gum leaves in your hands and smell their aroma, listen to the waves crashing at the shoreline, smell the salty air, watch the dance of a flickering fire, touch the earth or stand barefoot on grass.

Activity

Participants lie on the floor on their backs with eyes closed. The facilitator instructs participants to squeeze each part of the body really tight and then release it on an exhale, starting from the feet and moving all the way up to the neck and head. For example, “Squeeze your right foot and ankle up really tight, and release as you exhale. Now squeeze your left foot and ankle up really tight, and release. Next squeeze your right calf as tight as you can, and release as you breathe out...” etc., until the full body is released and relaxed. Bring feet up to be flat on the floor to create a semi supine position - legs bent with knees pointing to the sky. Then, imagine there is a small balloon hovering above the knees. Participants inhale by simply allowing the body to expand and take in air. On the exhale, they visualise blowing the balloon smoothly away. At the end of the exhale, allow the breath to re-enter the body (inhale) and repeat a few times. Next move on to an “ah” vowel sound on the exhale, then an “ee” and finally an “oo”. Try to complete this exercise with as little tension in the body as possible.

Reflection

- What does it feel like to let your body rest fully on the floor?
- How does focusing on breath and body change your awareness?
- What happens to your thoughts after releasing tension?
- Do you notice areas where you hold tension?
- With eyes closed, what do you notice about your other senses?
- How does your breath change when you focus on sensory experience?

ACTIVITY 36: Are You Ready? (Circus)

WBF Focus: Working in Groups

Other WBFs: Expressing Emotions, Listening, In the Zone

A playful warm-up game to engage the group vocally and physically, encouraging teamwork, clowning responses, and group cohesion.

Key Messages

- People thrive in groups when everyone respects each other.
- Reflecting on the group dynamic can improve functioning.
- We naturally fall into specific roles in a group such as facilitator, summariser, recorder, or presenter - trying new roles helps you grow.

Activity

Participants stand in a circle. The leader holds a ball and asks the group “Are you ready?” The whole group responds in unison “Yes, we’re ready!” with enthusiasm. The group must keep the ball up in the air at least ten times by hitting it up one person at a time. If it drops to the ground before ten times is achieved, the whole group must respond with exaggerated dismay. If ten hits are achieved, the whole group must celebrate together in a similarly exaggerated way!

Reflection Points

- How does hyping each other up feel?
- How does an exaggerated, playful response affect how you view mistakes (like dropping the ball)?
- Did you notice taking on a specific role within the group?
- How do you feel after the group succeeds and celebrates together?