



Training Course

ACTIVISM

101

Tools for Change

Austria

The Blue Whale Education Center

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Workshops Collection



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PROJECT OVERVIEW

Activism 101 is an international project which main activity was a training course held from August 17th to 23rd, 2025, at the Blue Whale Education Center in Tauchen, Austria. Bringing together 30 youth leaders from five European nations and 17 different nationalities, including many changemakers from the Global South, the program created a dedicated space for trust, solidarity, and empowerment among participants aged 18 to 40.

Driven by a shared determination to move beyond indifference in the face of global crises, the week combined emotional grounding with practical advocacy skills. The curriculum progressed from personal connection and boundary-setting to advanced tactical planning, exploring diverse activist practices ranging from rebellion and reform to cultural reimaging. Key learning modules included power mapping, message framing, sociocracy for shared leadership, and prefiguration (living out values in practice).

The training culminated in a dynamic field experience in Vienna, where six participant groups executed creative public actions, from flash mobs distributing "seeds of change" to interactive quizzes on migration and street interviews on global issues. These actions served as a real-world laboratory for applying theoretical knowledge, fostering confidence in engaging strangers and advocating for causes.

Supported by **Erasmus+** and the **European Union***, and facilitated by **CAMBIO** alongside guest trainer Marco Minoni, Activism 101 successfully equipped a diverse cohort with the tools to organize, act, and sustain movements. The project was realized in partnership with EU'th, Vagamondo, Tudatos Ifjúságért Alapítvány, Advocates Who Thrive, and Euroteam Czech Republic.

This **workshop collection** draws directly from the methodologies, reflections, and creative strategies developed during this intensive week, offering a roadmap for others seeking to foster agency and connect across borders.

This collection is the result of the intellectual work of the trainers of the course Marco Minoni, anthropologist, activist and expert in embodied practices, and Lara Riboni, educator, project manager and change-maker. It draws from many expert sources, which are referred to at the end of each workshop table.

**The European Commission's support to produce this collection of methods does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| PROJECT OVERVIEW..... | 2 |
| WORKSHOP - Creating Safety..... | 4 |
| WORKSHOP - What is Activism for you? | 11 |
| WORKSHOP - Find your Superpower | 16 |
| WORKSHOP - Expanding Our Capacity to Feel: Embodied Activism and Earth Emotions | 19 |
| WORKSHOP - Activism Speed Dating | 23 |
| WORKSHOP - Exploring Tactics..... | 26 |
| WORKSHOP - Craft Your Message | 30 |
| WORKSHOP - Power and Identities..... | 36 |
| WORKSHOP - The Perfect Activist (doesn't exist) | 39 |
| WORKSHOP - Living the Future Now. Prefiguration as Activism..... | 45 |

WORKSHOP - Creating Safety

Overview / Summary

Participants are invited to notice and accept their emotions and bodily sensations without trying to change them. A key focus is creating a safe environment where people feel empowered to say no, ask for what they need, and respect their own boundaries. Through carefully guided interactions, others in the group will act as gentle mirrors or “emotional triggers,” sparking self-inquiry and awareness. The session also aims to cultivate a strong sense of group cohesion and mutual trust.

Objectives

- ★ To support participants in deepening their self-awareness and emotional literacy by creating a safe, embodied space where vulnerability is welcome and agency is honored.
- ★ To invite participants into deeper connection with their emotional and physical responses in relational contexts, while cultivating agency, consent, and mutual care.

Learning Outcomes

- + Participants feel a sense of safety and trust within the group.
- + Participants increase their ability to notice and name their internal states.
- + Participants feel empowered to set boundaries and express needs.
- + A shared sense of connection and group cohesion emerges through honest, embodied presence.
- + Participants feel safe to be with whatever is present in them, without pressure to change it.
- + Participants increase awareness of how emotions and boundaries show up in the body.
- + Participants practice consent, asking, receiving, and saying no.
- + The group builds trust, empathy, and embodied sensitivity

Duration

Ideally, each session plan should be of around 1.30h (1 session), but of

course could be a bit shorter and leave more space for final reflection, or if needed can take more than one session with a 30 min coffee break in between.

Example:

- 10 min. of get to know each other/energizing activities
- 10 min. input
- 20 min. reflection in pairs (activate previous knowledge/personal experience)
- 20 min. group work (work with a text or information and present it creatively to the other groups)
- 20 min. reporting the outcomes of the group work in the big circle
- 10 min. of debriefing/closure

This is a suggestion. Feel free to change it if it fits better!

Number of participants

Adaptable for many different group sizes

Material & Preparation

- Big space
- Music box
- Wheel of consent
- - Post-its and pens

Activity plan (methods and exercises)

1. Arrival & Inner Journey (5min)

- Grounding with breath or somatic check-in.
- Optional: gentle guided meditation or short inner journey to settle in the body.
- Invite curiosity: "What's alive in you right now?"

2. Guidelines & Framing (5)

- Emphasize:
 - ★ There's no goal to feel a certain way.
 - ★ You are free to say no, sit out, or stay closed off.

- ★ We welcome all responses — stillness, openness, withdrawal.
 - ★ Try to stay curious about *what is*.
 - ★ Explain clearly how participants can pause, leave an exercise, or say no at any time.”
 - ★ How do you react to someone saying no?
 - ★ Welcome every feeling, any "no" is accepted
- Share about trauma-awareness and the creation of a safer/brave space (e.g., “I’m also on this journey. I’ll share parts of my story along the way.”)

3. Relational Warm-Up (8 min)

Walking around, meeting each other

- ➔ Why: Arriving in the space and the group. Noticing what happens in the body as we meet others.
- Walk around by yourself. Explore the space
- Walk around, start making eye contact with each other
- Walk around, interact with those you meet with a high five, a fist bump, a hug
- Find a partner. Hold eye contact for 30 seconds. Move on

4. Exercise 1: Balancing the Stick (8 min)

- In pairs, balance a stick (without talking to each other), using just your open palms,
- Focus: cooperation, attunement, non-verbal negotiation.
- Debrief briefly in pairs: “What was that like?”

5. Exercise 2: Moving & Being Moved (6 min)

In pairs:

- Round 1: One person tries to gently move the other (pushing and pulling, gentle dance).
 - Round 2: Switch roles.
 - Round 3: Both people engage in playful pushing.
- Emphasis: resistance, yielding, agency. Expression of boundaries

- Pair sharing: What emotions/sensations arose?

6. Exercise 3: The space dance (12 Min)

- ➔ Why: Notice what happens in our body when we relate to others
- Find a partner. Choose who is A and who is B
 - A stays where they are, B can walk closer or further away from A, while holding eye contact. Experiment with the space.
 - Switch roles
 - Lastly, both people can move, creating a little dance

7. Consent & Boundaries – Input & Practice (30 min)

The Wheel of Consent helps us understand who an action is for and whether everyone involved agrees to it.

Short explanation:

- **Wheel of Consent** (*Receiving, Giving, Taking, Allowing*)
- *Difference between rules, boundaries, and agreements*

Introduction to the Wheel of consent:

The “**asker**” is always the one who benefits.

- The other person either **accepts** (if it’s for the asker’s benefit) or **allows** (if it’s for the other person’s benefit).
- The Wheel of Consent pairs are **mirrors** of each other:
- **Serving** ↔ **Accepting** (*they go together*): Serving and Accepting are two sides of the “gift.”
- **Taking** ↔ **Allowing** (*they go together*): Taking and Allowing are two sides of the “permission.”

★ **Serving vs. Accepting** → *Same action, different focus*

- If I rub your shoulders because **you asked** and it’s **for you**, I’m **Serving**.
- If you rub my shoulders because **I asked** and it’s **for me**, I’m **Accepting**.
The touch may look identical, but the *beneficiary* flips the quadrant.

★ **Taking vs. Allowing** → *Same action, different focus*

- If I touch your arm because **I want to feel it** and it's **for me**, I'm **Taking** (with your consent).
- If you touch my arm because **you want to feel it** and it's **for you**, I'm **Allowing**.
Again, the action looks the same — what changes is *who it's for*.

1. Serving (A does what B wants, for B's benefit)

Focus is on the respondent

- **B asks:** "Can you massage my shoulders for 2 minutes?"
- **A agrees:** "Yes, I'll do that."
- **A is doing the action: serving.**
- **B is receiving the benefit.**

You act for the other person's benefit, following their request.

- Can you give me a piggyback ride across the room?
- Can you act out my favorite animal?
- Can you do a silly dance that I choose?

2. Taking (A does what A wants, for A's benefit)

Focus is on the asker.

- **A asks:** "May I massage your shoulders for 2 minutes?"
- **B agrees:** "Yes, you can."
- **A is doing the action.**
- **A is receiving the benefit.**
- **B is allowing** (they are not the focus of benefit, but they give consent).

Taking (I do what I want, for me — "I take")

You take action for your own enjoyment, with their consent.

- Can I try your hat, scarf, and glass because I like the look?
- Can I tap on your knee to hear the sound?
- Can I balance a pen on your shoulder?

3. Allowing (B does what B wants, for B's benefit — A allows)

Focus is on the receiver

- **B asks:** “May I use your arm to test how stretchy your sleeve is?”
- **A agrees:** “Yes, go ahead.”
- **B is doing the action.**
- **B is receiving the benefit.**
- **A is allowing** (they are not the focus of benefit, but they give consent).

Allowing (You do what you want, for you — “I allow”)

They act for their own benefit, while you agree to allow it.

- Can I touch your hair?
- Can I stack a random object on your head to see how many fit
- Can I pole Letting them gently poke your arm to test “bounciness”
- Can you be my partner in a slow-motion fake sword fight?
- Can I draw a smiley face on your hand

4. Accepting (B does what A wants, for A’s benefit)

Focus is on the asker

- **A asks:** “Can you bring me a glass of water?”
- **B agrees:** “Yes, I’ll do that.”
- **B is doing the action.**
- **A is receiving the benefit.**

They act for your benefit, and you practice enjoying it.

- Can you fan me with a piece of paper?
- Can I ask for a “victory lap” around the room on your back
- Can you cheer for you as if you’ve just won a world championship

Debrief:

Quick triad share:

- (2 min each: “What surprised you?”) before coming back to plenary. This helps integrate.

Other possibilities:

- Hand massage, light tapping or ask to play rock, paper scissors, or winning/loosing at arm/finger wrestling

8. Exercise 4: Boundary Mapping (8 min)

Write on a Post-it

- "A boundary I'm learning to name is..."
- "A desire I feel more comfortable asking for is..."
- "Something I want to practice saying 'no' to is..."
- Stick on a wall or place in a circle (silent harvesting)

9. Closing Circle (8 min)

- Step into the circle if you resonate with certain statements (e.g., "I felt challenged today", "I discovered something about myself", etc.)
- Final round of words, gestures, or silence
- Gratitude & closure (as people step into the circle if they resonate)

Resources & References

The wheel of consent: <https://www.wheelofconsent.org/thebook>

WORKSHOP - What is Activism for you?

Overview / Summary

A Socratic Walk (a mindful, philosophical practice in which a guide and participant walk together, using probing questions and active listening) with a guided conversation to get to know each other and reflect on what we perceive as activism, in conversation pairs. - Harvesting what Activism means to you? (spectrum lines)

Objectives

- ★ Participants get to know the physical surroundings of the venue.
- ★ Participants start to get to know each other.
- ★ Participants reflect on their personal definition of activism and compare to other people's perception.

Learning Outcomes

- + having an expanded perception of possibilities of activism
- + appreciate diversity of activist engagement

Disclaimers

- consider the length of the walk according to the participant's conditions (there are several options)
- (be prepared for physical activity, adapt to weather conditions, take water/snacks)

Duration

Total duration: 90 min.

Number of participants

Flexible, conversation in pairs of two

Material & Preparation

- Timer
- Bell or something that makes a sound to signal to switch conversation partner

Activity plan

(methods and exercises)

1. Questions to discuss in couples (switch partners in between questions):

- Describe the place/the house/the apartment where you grew up
- What new skills have you learned recently? (Or what would you like to learn soon)
- What would be the one book or movie you would recommend to your younger self
- Do you consider yourself an activist? Why (not)?
- What's an example of activism that inspires you?
- What is giving you hope right now?
- What is alive in you in relation to the state of the world/how do you feel about the state of the world?

2. Ritual

This ritual helps participants slow down, connect with the environment, and transition into deeper reflection.

a) Opening (1 min)

“Let’s take a short pause together. I would like to do a little gratitude ritual. To me, a ritual can be a powerful door to feel and connect to ourselves and to something beyond. My invitation is to practice and be curious. If it's difficult or new or even feels weird for you, that is totally ok. There is nothing in particular to feel.

Close your eyes if you feel comfortable, or simply lower your gaze.

Feel the ground under your feet. Notice how it holds you. Notice your weight resting here.

We’re going to take a few minutes to connect with the land around us and say thank you for hosting us.”

“When you’re ready, open your eyes and look at the trees nearby.

As you breathe in, imagine your breath meeting the air the trees have made.

As you breathe out, imagine your breath going back to them.

Inhale... receive from the trees.

Exhale... give back to the trees.

Let's do this a few times together."

Touching the Earth – Giving & Receiving (4 min)

"Now, if you'd like, slowly reach down and touch the ground, maybe the soil, a leaf, or a stone.

As you breathe in, feel that you are receiving something from the earth — maybe calm, maybe strength, maybe just a moment of stillness.

As you breathe out, send something back — maybe gratitude, care, or kindness.

We'll take a few breaths like this."

b) *Closing (2 min)*

"Let's stand again, feeling the ground through our feet.

Thank you, earth, for holding us. we are guests here, and we are grateful to be here and we recognize our privilege of being here together. May this journey serve all.

Spectrum lines:

- After participants position themselves on the spectrum, invite people standing in different places to share their perspectives with each other briefly.
 - For the last spectrum, we can have a variation of the spectrum line in which people get closer and further from the person saying it, according to the extent to which they resonate or not with the experience
 - We first share, and then participants also share and ask
 - People can move around
- 1) "I consider myself an activist" ↔ "I don't consider myself an activist."
 - 2) "In my country, activism is generally safe" ↔ "In my country, activism can be dangerous."
 - 3) "Activism should be loud and visible" ↔ "Activism can be quiet and subtle."
 - 4) "Activism is a special role" ↔ "Activism is part of everyday life"
 - 5) "Effective activism must confront systems directly" ↔ "Effective

activism can also .work within systems”

6) “Activism is driven by anger” ↔ “Activism is driven by love”

After reflecting on what activism means, participants explore different roles people can play within movements.

3. What type of activist are you?

1. *The Healer*

- Cares for people, relationships, and the earth.
- Builds trust and emotional resilience.
- Makes sure people feel safe, included, and connected.
- Super power: Restoring energy so the group can keep going.

2. *The Visionary*

- Sees a better future and tells the story of how to get there.
- Inspires hope and possibility.
- Keeps the “why” alive when things get hard.
- Super power: Helping people believe change is possible.

3. *The Builder*

- Creates structures, systems, and projects that make the vision real.
- Knows how to turn ideas into practical action.
- Organizes resources, plans steps, and gets things done.

Super power: Making it work in the real world.

4. *The Disruptor*

- Challenges injustice and shakes up the status quo.
- Speaks truth to power and pushes for change.
- Creates urgency so things can't stay the same.
- Super power: Breaking through resistance and complacency.

Debriefing and Reflection

Debriefing Steps:

- Explain how to guide a group talk after the activity.
- You could use open-ended questions like:

- "What did you learn about working together in this task?"
- "How did you feel in your role?"
- "What problems did you face, and how did you solve them?"

Thinking and sharing:

- E.g., you can ask people to write down key ideas or talk about their feelings.
- Say if the talk should be in pairs, small groups, or with everyone.

Facilitation Guidelines and Tips

Guidelines for the chat:

- Curiosity
- Listen to understand not to respond
- We're not here to convince each other
- Active listening
- Before any of you start speaking, take a moment of silence, getting used for a new person next to you, thinking. When one wants to start, go!

WORKSHOP – Find your Superpower

Overview / Summary

Two-part workshop: First, a guided reflection on three main messages that people would like to send out into the world. The second part will be a practical activity, printing these messages on an old T-Shirt.

Objectives

Participants reflect on the things that are important to them, the message that they want to send out into the world. It also works as an empowerment session, characterizing the participants as super heroes.

Learning Outcomes

- The participants come out with three messages/topics that are important to them
- Everyone designs at least one item with one important message on it

Disclaimers

no special disclaimer needed, just in general: Anyone who feels uncomfortable can step out of the exercise

Duration

Total: 90 min

Number of participants

30

Material & Preparation

- participants bring (old) clothes, preferably not printed T-shirts
- Organizers could offer some spare T-shirts/ bags ...
- paint/pens to write on clothes, pieces of cloth to sew onto, spray paint,
- cardboard, scissors, and pens to cut the shape
- drying space for shirts,
- protective covering for tables/floor,

Activity plan (methods and exercises)

1. *Energizer: 10 min*
2. *Preparation:*
Participants are asked to find a comfortable position and, if comfortable, close their eyes.

3. Get into the super hero mode: 20 min

One facilitator takes the participants on a guided “meditation”:

“Let’s go on a little journey together. Sit comfortably, place your feet on the ground, and gently close your eyes. Take a deep breath in... and out. Leave behind the room for a moment and step into your imagination.

Picture yourself standing tall on the top of a hill. The air is fresh; the sky is wide. The wind blows through your hair as you look out into the distance. You feel strong. You feel powerful. Because you are not just yourself anymore – you are a superhero.

Notice what you’re wearing. Is it a cape, armor, or something completely unique? What colors surround you? Is there a symbol on your chest, something that tells the world who you are? Take a moment to see it clearly. Breathe it in. This is your superhero form.

And every superhero has a gift. Yours isn’t flying or invisibility – it’s something even more special. You can transmit thoughts directly into people’s minds. Imagine that power flowing through you. You can send your ideas to anyone you choose: the whole world, your friends, your community, or just one person close to you.

But there’s a challenge: you can only send three messages before your power runs out. So, take a moment and ask yourself: if I had only three thoughts to share, what would they be? What messages do I want the world to hear? And who do I want to hear them?

See those three sentences forming in your hands, glowing like energy, ready to be released. Hold them there for a breath... and another. These are the words your superhero will carry.”

(Pause gently.)

“Now, slowly open your eyes. On your paper, write down your three glowing messages. These are your hero’s truths, and yours.”

4. The reveal of the super power: 5 min

>> Here’s your superpower:

Creativity

Creativity is your superpower. Being creative means we can transmit ideas and put thoughts into people’s minds. And because of the special ways in

which art works (more on this later) we can also move people to act. Art is a special form of communication. We can use it to convey ideas to, and conjure emotions within, many different audiences. It may be an audience of a few dozen people at a fancy gallery, a few hundred people on a train, or millions through TV or the Internet, all depending on what media we use and the venues the work appears within.

The artistic activity transforms personal reflections into visible public messages.

Look at the three things you have written. You have a valuable piece of paper in front of you. This is the starting point for what you care about and what you want to communicate to the world.

5 min break to get T-shirt

1. *Artistic activity – T-shirt printing with their message (35 min)*

Explaining to the participants which tools to use and how, supporting them in the process according to their needs

2. *Vernissage (15 min)*

Divide the group in 4 and ask them to present each other their t-shirts as if they would be pieces of art (material, technique, style, artist, idea behind)

(2 min each more or less)

Debriefing and Reflection

Get together in groups of two/three people. Present the art pieces as if it was in an exhibition. Debriefing Questions:

- What other super powers do you think you have (to spread the message)?
- “Was it easy to feel as a superhero?”

Get together as a whole group, give a finishing speech to motivate everyone for the week.

Resources & References

<https://c4aa.org/2017/01/imagine-you-are-a-superhero>

WORKSHOP – Expanding Our Capacity to Feel: Embodied Activism and Earth Emotions

Overview / Summary

This 3-hour immersive workshop invites participants to reconnect with their sensory and emotional bodies, to combat apathy and repression regarding the eco-climate crisis. Rooted in Joanna Macy’s “The Work That Reconnects” and deep ecology, the session moves from sensory awakening to embodied exploration of the Five Elements (Fire, Air, Earth, Water, Metal), culminating in a collective ritual that transforms personal grief and anger into a source of resilient, sustainable activism.

Objectives

- ★ To address and release emotional repression regarding the global ecological and social crisis.
- ★ To increase participants' tolerance for both comfortable and uncomfortable sensations, fostering emotional regulation.
- ★ To cultivate a profound sense of interdependence with the Earth and its beings.
- ★ To provide practical somatic tools for moving through difficult emotions without getting stuck or burning out.

Learning Outcomes

- + Participants can identify and name their current emotional state using the TIMES framework (Thoughts, Images, Movement, Emotions, Sensations, Heart).
- + Participants demonstrate the ability to shift between "balanced" and "stressed" states of the Five Elements through physical embodiment.
- + Participants articulate a personal strategy for regulating difficult emotions (grief, rage, fear) using somatic grounding techniques.
- + Participants leave with a concrete understanding of how to integrate "Earth Emotions" into their daily activist practice.

Disclaimers

- **Emotional Intensity:** This workshop explores deep emotions related to the climate crisis, including grief, fear, and anger. It may bring up strong feelings.
- **Safety First:** Participants are reminded that they can leave the room at any time if they feel overwhelmed. There is no requirement to speak or participate in every exercise.
- **Environment:** Lights will be dimmed; phones must be silenced and put away. No photos or recordings are permitted to ensure a safe, confidential space.
- **Approach:** We do not aim to "fix" emotions but to sit with them curiously,

beyond the binary of good/bad or pleasure/pain.

3 Hours

Part 1: Sensory Awakening & Body Mapping (60 min)

- 10 min: Sensory Awakening Walk (5 senses)
- 10 min: Expanding & Contracting Shapes
- 10 min: "Yes/No" Body Compass
- 30 min: The Five Elements Embodiment (Fire, Air, Earth, Water, Metal)

Duration

Part 2: Guided Visualization & Drawing (25 min)

- 15 min: Guided Visualization ("Body as a Planet")
- 10 min: Drawing the Emotional Landscape

Part 3: Outdoor Ritual & Integration (65 min)

- 5 min: Opening Circle & Ritual Explanation
- 25 min: Four Elements Emotional Ritual (Station rotation)
- 10 min: Integration Ritual (Gathering in center)
- 20 min: Grounding & Pair Reflection

Part 4: Creative Expression & Closure (30 min)

- 15 min: Small group creative embodiment of "Earth Emotions"
- 15 min: Collective sharing and closing circle

Number of Participants

Ideal: 12-20 participants.
Minimum: 8 (to allow for group dynamics).
Maximum: 25 (requires additional facilitators for stations).

Material & Preparation

Space:

- Indoor room with space to move freely (circle arrangement).
- Access to an outdoor area or large indoor space for the ritual stations.
- Ability to dim lights.

Materials:

- Journals and colored pencils/markers.
- **Element Stations:**
 - Earth:* Stones, soil, leaves, seeds.
 - Water:* Bowl of water, shells, blue cloth.
 - Fire:* Candles (or LED equivalents), red/orange cloth, sticks.
 - Air:* Feathers, incense, bells, light fabrics.

- *Metal*: An empty bowl in the center.
- Gong or bell for timing transitions.
- Incense for the closing ritual.
- Printed "TIMES" framework handout (optional).

**Activity Plan
(Methods and
Exercises)**

1. Sensory Awakening (10 min):

Guide participants in a silent walk to notice 5 things seen, 4 touched, 3 heard, 2 smelled, 1 tasted. Collect one natural object.

2. Body Awareness (20 min):

Practice "Expanding & Contracting Shapes" to explore tension/release. Follow with the "Yes/No Body Compass" to locate emotional boundaries physically.

3. The Five Elements Embodiment (30 min):

Facilitator introduces Fire, Air, Earth, Water, and Metal. Participants cycle through each element:

1. Step into the physical shape (posture, breath, gaze).
2. Explore the "Balanced" state (prompted by facilitator).
3. Shift to the "Stressed" state and notice changes.
4. Release and reset with shaking or grounding.
5. Brief reflection on the experience.

4. Guided Visualization & Drawing (25 min):

Lead a visualization where the body is imagined as a planet (bones=mountains, blood=oceans, etc.). Participants then draw their "Emotional Landscape" based on the visualization.

5. The Four Elements Ritual (30 min):

Move to the outdoor/station area. Participants rotate silently through the four corners (Earth/Fear, Water/Grief, Fire/Anger, Air/Joy, Metal/Emptiness). At each station, they pause, feel, and express (movement/sound) before moving on, signaled by a gong every 4 minutes.

6. Integration & Creative Expression (30 min):

Gather in a circle. Participants place a token from their favorite element into the central bowl. Follow with a grounding practice and pair reflection ("What's alive in you right now?"). Conclude with small groups creating a collective gesture or sound to embody an "Earth Emotion."

**Debriefing and
Reflection**

Guiding Questions:

- "Which element felt most natural, and which felt most challenging?"
- "How did your body respond when you shifted from the balanced to the stressed state?"
- "What did you discover about your capacity to hold difficult emotions like grief or anger?"

- "How can you use these somatic tools in your daily activism?"

Format:

Start with a pair share (4 mins each), then open to the whole group for voluntary sharing. Use the "repeating question" technique to deepen listening without fixing.

**Facilitation
Guidelines and
Tips**

- **Safety Monitoring:** Continuously scan the room for signs of distress. Remind participants they can opt-out or leave at any time.
- **Pacing:** Be flexible with timing. If the group is deeply engaged in the ritual, allow them to stay longer; if energy is low, shorten the creative section.
- **Tone:** Maintain a calm, non-judgmental presence. Avoid interpreting participants' experiences; simply hold the space.
- **Transitions:** Use the gong clearly to signal movement between stations. Ensure the path between stations is clear and safe.
- **Inclusivity:** Offer verbal descriptions for all visual elements to ensure accessibility. Encourage participants to adapt movements to their physical abilities.

**Resources &
References**

- **Joanna Macy:** *The Work That Reconnects* (specifically the "Earth Emotions" and "Active Hope" modules).
- **Deep Ecology:** Concepts of interdependence and the "Self" as the ecosystem.
- **Neuroscience:** Verduyn et al. (2012) on the duration of emotions; the "90-second rule" for physiological surges.
- **Non-Violent Communication (NVC):** Framework for observing emotions without judgment or projection.
- **Somatic Practices:** Embodied learning techniques for trauma-informed activism.

WORKSHOP – Activism Speed Dating

Overview / Summary

In a "speed dating" event, participants present each other success stories of social movements and activist groups. Afterwards, we analyze the most important characteristics of a successful movement. The profiles of the presented organizations will be displayed in a gallery to serve as inspiration for the rest of the week.

Objectives

- ★ Discover inspiring stories of change
- ★ get knowledge of what characteristics make a campaign successful
- ★ explore the variety of tactics activists use

Disclaimers

Nothing specific

Duration

- 5 min energizer
- 10 minutes check-in
- 5 min explanation of the activity
- 40 min speed dating (5 pairs, 8 min each pair, 4 min each person talking)
- 20 minutes reflection groups
- 10 minutes closure

Number of participants

10-40

Material & Preparation

- 2 concentric circles of chairs -> inner and outer circle
- print the speed dating templates
- print questions for group reflections

Activity plan (methods and

Before the workshop, participants should prepare a short presentation about one activist, campaign, or movement that inspires them

exercises)

Step 1:

Set up the room (concentric circle of chairs)

Step 2:

Energizer: Identity crisis

Step 3:

Check-in (energy level; communications from the reflection the day before)

Step 4:

Explain that each of them has to join a speed dating event, they will not present themselves, but the activist/group they prepared. They will meet each other in pairs. Each of them will have 4 min to present the activist, and then switch. After 8 min (when the bell rings) the people sitting in the outside circle will move one sit to the left. It will continue until we give you a final signal.

Step 5:

Participants meet back in the big circle. 6 groups are created and will have to reflect on the following questions:

- 1) Which example did you find particularly inspiring?
- 2) What do you think made their actions successful?
- 3) Can you imagine joining one of the activism groups presented? Why?

Step 6: *Create a gallery of possibilities*

Hang the profiles of the activists or activist group they brought on the wall, categorized by causes they care for (let the participants decide) and invite them to walk silently for 10 minutes and read thorough the profiles they have not met during the exercise.

Debriefing and Reflection

Guiding questions:

- *Have you found other activists/groups who are active in a similar way or on similar topics to the ones of your example?*
- *Have you found inspiring examples?*
- *were there any media or tactics that you found especially impressive?*

Facilitation Guidelines and Tips

- Check the speed during the dating time.
- Check the Energy level of people while telling a story.

- Facilitators could moderate it excitingly, as in a dating show.

**Resources &
References**

Template for the exercise: <https://cloud.wechange.de/f/15593342>

WORKSHOP – Exploring Tactics

Overview / Summary

Tactics are actions taken to get someone (your target) to give you what you want (your demands). Each tactic should fit within your overall strategy to reach your end goal. There are a variety of tactics that you can choose from. In this workshop we explore them and we try to determine which tactics to use and when in order to get your group what it wants. Participants will try to connect the examples from the speed-dating with the different tactics illustrated.

Objectives

- ★ Familiarize with different tactics used in activism
- ★ Explore pro and cons of them
- ★ develop cooperation and creativity skills

Learning Outcomes

- + Learn about popular tactics
- + Learn the 4R model
- + Get inspired by different non-violent actions

Disclaimers

No specific trigger warning, just a general reminder to take care of yourself and step out if you don't feel like joining the activity

Duration

Total: 1,30h

- 10 minutes energizing activity
- 5-minute explanation of the task and division into groups.
- 20 minutes group work to create the scenes.
- 35 minutes of performances, guessing, and discussion of when they could be useful to use them.
- 20 minutes presenting the 4R model and connecting to examples from the activism speed-dating.

Number of participants

20-30

Material & Preparation

- Circle of chairs to start and separate space for the group work + a "stage area for the representations
- Hand-outs with the descriptions of the tactics
- Print of the Tactics description to choose from in the guessing part
- Flipchart with the 4R model explanation
- Glue
- Speed-dating descriptions (visible on the wall)
- Markers

Activity plan (methods and exercises)

Instructions:

1. Energizer – "Statues Game" (10 min)

Start with a fun and physical energizing game to help participants loosen up, connect with their bodies, and prepare for creative work.

Optional tip: You can connect the game to the theme by asking participants to form statues representing concepts like "resistance," "freedom," or "solidarity."

2. Task Introduction & Group Division (5 min)

Briefly explain the activity:

- Each group will receive a tactic (described on a card or handout).
- Their task is to *create a short scene* that illustrates the tactic in action, without naming it.
- The rest of the group will guess the tactic and then reflect on when and how it can be used.

Divide the participants into small groups (3–5 people per group). Depending on the number of participants, you might need to choose only some of the tactics representable.

3. Group Work – Scene Creation (20 min)

Each group reads its assigned tactic and brainstorms how to represent it through a short performance (2–3 minutes). Tactics examples are boycott, sit-ins, protest, street theatre, petition, occupation, mutual aid, art

intervention, etc.

They prepare their scene using movement, voice, signs, or props, while keeping the name of the tactic hidden.

4. Performances, Guessing, and Group Reflection (35 min)

Each group presents its scene one at a time.

After each performance:

- The other participants guess which tactic was shown. They can choose from the Tactics cards that the group received.
- Facilitate a short discussion about the tactic:
 1. *What are its strengths and weaknesses?*
 2. *When is it most effective?*
 3. *Are there any risks or other considerations?*

Tip: Keep each round (performance + reflection) to about 7 minutes max to fit 5-6 groups.

5. Connecting Tactics to the 4R Model & Real-Life Examples (20 min)

After all scenes are presented, bring the group back together for a debrief:

- **Visual Introduction (3-5 min)**

Briefly introduce the **4R model of activism**, which outlines four complementary approaches to creating change: **Rebel** (disrupting power), **Reform** (working within the system), **Recreate** (building alternative ways of living), and **Reimagine** (shifting narratives and worldviews).
Use a visual flipchart showing the 4Rs with short definitions .
Emphasize that movements often blend these approaches and that each plays a different but valuable role in shifting society.
- **Interactive Mapping (10-12 min)**

Invite the group to **map the tactics** used in the earlier performances onto the 4R framework.
You can use four corners of the room to represent each “R”. Ask participants to place each tactic where they feel it fits best. Prompt them to reflect on:

 - What kind of change the tactic is aiming for (disruption, dialogue, cultural shift, etc.)

- *Whether it challenges systems directly, works within them, builds alternatives, or changes how we imagine the world*

*Encourage discussion, especially when there's disagreement—this opens up reflection on how **tactics can serve multiple purposes** depending on context and intent.*

Debriefing and Reflection

Debriefing:

- **What made some tactics more immediately recognizable or powerful than others?**
→ *This can spark discussion about symbolism, clarity of message, and public perception.*
 - **How do different tactics involve different levels of risk, effort, or visibility—and how might that influence your choice in real life?**
→ *This invites participant to connect tactics to real-world strategy and context.*
3. **Which tactics felt most personally meaningful or inspiring to you—and why?**
→ *This encourages emotional connection and helps participants reflect on their values and potential role in activism.*

Facilitation Guidelines and Tips

- Check if participants are feeling safe and comfortable throughout the activity.
- Time management and cues (e.g., “Use a bell to signal transitions between steps”).
- Observing group dynamics and intervening if necessary.
- *Encouraging inclusivity and active participation.*

Resources & References

<https://www.advocatesforyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Youth-Activist-Toolkit.pdf>

<https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/browse-methods>

WOKSHOP - Craft Your Message

Overview / Summary

This workshop serves to introduce the practice of Framing in advocacy. Participants create message boxes starting from their personal examples.

Objectives

- ★ Write messaging for a practice campaign or issue
- ★ Create and use a message box

Learning Outcomes

- + Understand what strategic messaging and frames are and why they are important
- + Understand the crucial role of values in campaign messaging
- + Learn to tailor messaging to a particular audience

Duration

1,30 h

Example:

- 10 minutes anchor sharing
- Explain framing (5 min)
- Present the F.R.A.M.E.S. guidelines (5 min)
- Messaging Practice (10 mins)
- Present Message Box (5 min)
- Participants create their own Message box (40 mins (5 intro + 15 work + 20 interviews))
- 10 minutes of debriefing/closure

Number of participants

20-30

Material & Preparation

- Prepare flipcharts with definitions of Messaging, Framing, the FRAMES guidelines, and the Message Box
- Flipchart and markers for the participants

-A tool to use as a microphone

**Activity plan
(methods and
exercises)**

Step 1: Anchor sharing (10 min)

Participants mingle around with music; when the music stops, they are asked to think and share about a time they tried to convince someone of something that person wasn't sure about. (Examples: asking a teacher for an extension, asking a friend to go somewhere with you when they are feeling lazy, talking politics with a family member over a holiday.)

Come back to the circle after everyone shared with at least 1 person and ask them to reflect and listen to a few voices: How did you approach the conversation? What worked, what didn't?

Campaign-based relationships and personal relationships have a lot in common. In each of these personal examples, it was all about trying to get your target (your friend, uncle, teacher, etc.) to understand and eventually agree with your perspective. That's also what campaign messaging is all about.

Step 2: Explain framing (5 min)

Prepare in advance a graphic flipchart with the definition and key aspects of Framing. Present it to participants and leave space for questions. (for background theory, see sources)

Step 3: Example of Framing (5 min)

Prepare in advance a flipchart with a table with 3 columns. Ask them to recall and name in the study case of the Activism 101 workshop which one is the Opponent's message, which one is the Activists message and which are the concept or values that both care about (e.g. wellbeing, health, safety...). Place each of them in a column and pair them up based on the core value.

Conclude with providing a definition of Strategic Messaging:

Strategic messaging is a set of statements that uses intentional framing

that works with people's values and makes them want to take action.

Strategic messaging is the language we use to talk about our issues. In campaign communication, it is designed to bring people over to our side, to influence policy, and/or to win a campaign. It is meant to help us connect with people by meeting them where they're at, by using language they understand and speaking to their values — but it can also share new information or ideas. The end goal is to make your audience agree with your perspective, feel empowered, and want to make a difference in the direction of your issue.

Eg table:

| Opponent's messages | Values | Beyond Coal messages |
|---|--------|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "If coal plants and mines shut down, hardworking people will lose their jobs." • "The economy is bad enough already." • "This coal plant will provide our town with jobs that we desperately need." | Jobs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Investment in clean energy will create new jobs." • "The clean energy transition is already happening. In fact, more workers today are employed in the wind industry than in the coal mining industry." <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "As our economy shifts away from fossil fuels and toward clean energy, we must ensure economic justice for all workers, including access to good, family-sustaining union jobs for fossil fuel workers." |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Electricity saves lives and improves people's quality of life." • "Scrubbers and other technology can make 'clean coal' even cleaner." | Health | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Coal makes us sick." • "Coal is a major trigger of asthma attacks and the #1 source of mercury pollution." • "There are cleaner and safer energy sources than coal, and our communities deserve better." |

Step 4: Present the F.R.A.M.E.S. guidelines (5 min)

Prepare a flipchart and ask a different person to read each point.

Frame the Issue

Does it reinforce the vision and values that you are promoting? Framing means defining the problem, who will be broadly impacted, and the solution.

Reframe Opponent's Story & Reinforce Our Frame

Make sure your message is not just reiterating your opponent's frame. Reframing means changing the terms of debate on the issue.

Accessible to the Audience

Who is your message trying to persuade? Be as specific as possible about the audience and ensure that the message is crafted in terms of language, context, and values that will be appealing to them.

Memorable

The message has got to be memorable, easy to spread and "sticky." How

can you encapsulate your message in a symbol, slogan, or metaphor that captures the essence?

Emotional

People don't swing into action because of a pie chart. An effective message should speak to people in terms of values, and deliver some emotional impact. Trigger emotional responses with themes like tragedy, hope, anger, frustration, and don't forget joy!

Simple & Short

This means to get to the core essence of the issue. What is the most important point of the issue? What is it that makes it matter to your audience?

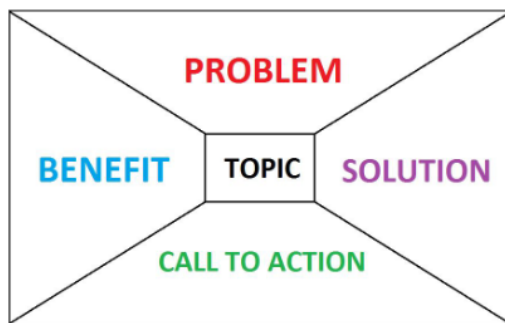
Step 5: Messaging Practice (10 mins)

Co-create with the help of the participants and the example following the FRAME points of the case of the Advocacy 101 workshop targeting the local community and list of some of the values they identify for their target audience, and several key messages to use when targeting that audience.

Step 6: Present Message Box (5 min)

Prepare a flipchart with this info:

(Flipchart the blank message box)



This is a blank message box. A message box is a visual tool for organizing strategic messaging, an alternative to having a long laundry-list of talking points. It can help us be more nimble and able to respond to questions while staying on message.

This message box has 4 parts, with the topic in the center. Together, these 4 components tell a persuasive and comprehensive story. Each part should have a main idea and several specific talking points.

Remember: There are lots of ways to create a message box — this is just one example.

PROBLEM – identifies and frames the issue.

- Starting at the top of the box is the “problem” your campaign is trying to address.

SOLUTION – identifies and frames concrete steps to fix the problem.

- The right side of the box is the “solution” to the problem you've defined. This is important! Research shows that it's not enough to just “raise awareness” or get people upset about problems. If we want people to take action, we also have to present solutions and show people that they can take action to make a difference.

CALL TO ACTION – shows how target audiences can work together to implement the solution.

- The bottom of the box is the “call to action” – showing how we can change things, together.

BENEFITS – connects with the audience over shared benefits.

- The left side of the box is the “benefit” – how we as a group, campus, community, or nation will benefit if we do solve this problem and act together.

Step 7: Create their own Message box (40 mins (5 intro + 15 work + 20

interviews)

Divide participants in small groups of about 4 people. Give them the task of creating a message box for a topic they care about as a group. They have to identify clearly a target group and keep the FRAMES guidelines in mind. Give them 15 min to finalize their message box flipchart.

After the groups are finished have a trainer pose as a reporter and interview a spokesperson per each group in front of the whole group.

Post the interviewee's message box within view during the interview. Afterwards, ask other participants which points from the message box they saw being used in the interview and what they thought worked.

Ask the interviewees for their reflections too.

Before the interviews, share these public speaking tips:

- Clearly connect the 4 parts of the box. Show how the Problem connects to the Solution, or how the Call to Action will lead to the Benefits, etc.
- Try not to get stuck in one section of the box, especially the Problem section. Instead, be sure to bridge back to the Benefits and values that people care about, or the Call to Action and Solution that will inspire your audience.
- Stick to the message box during the interview. If your mind goes blank, try visualizing the box and jumping to one of the sections.

Debriefing and Reflection

Debriefing (10 min):

Come back to the full group for reflection/debrief. Hear a few answers to each of these questions:

- *How did making a message box help you think about the way you talked about your issue?*
- *WHY is it important to be intentional about messaging?*
- *What was the most important takeaway from this session?*

Facilitation Guidelines and

Tips

- *Check if participants are feeling safe and comfortable throughout the activity.*
- *Time management and cues (e.g., “Use a bell to signal transitions between steps”).*
- *Observing group dynamics and intervening if necessary*
- *Encouraging inclusivity and active participation*
- *Reminders to be flexible with the timing or adapt instructions based on the group’s energy level.*

Resources & References

George Lakoff’s book Don’t Think of an Elephant

Center for Story-Based Strategy

Communications 101: Framing and Messaging:

<https://www.powershift.org/sites/default/files/resources/files/Communications%20%5B2019%5D.pdf>

WORKSHOP – Power and Identities

Overview / Summary

Workshop to introduce the concepts of power, rank and privileges.

Objectives

★ Familiarize the group with the concept of power and where it comes from.

Learning Outcomes

- + Building awareness around privilege and power dynamics in groups
- + Becoming more aware of power and privilege individuals hold in groups and considering ways of navigating this well
- + Building skill, literacy and courage in speaking about these themes
- + Self-awareness and emotional literacy
- + Strengthening trust and deeper connection in the group.

Disclaimers

This training includes discussions about systems of oppression and examples of how oppression shows up in our lives and movements. If at any point during the training you feel triggered by these discussions, please feel free to step away and take care of yourself however you need to

Duration

1:30h

Number of participants

5-30

Material & Preparation

- Paper (1 sheet per participant)
- colored markers
- Flipchart and markers

**Activity plan
(methods and
exercises)**

Explain that a part of activism is about dealing with power. And because of this, it is important to be able to recognize where power comes from. This could be in different levels.

Step 1 (30 min) : Embodiment exercise (“The machine” from Theater of the oppressed)

Participants are asked to collectively build a “machine” with their bodies. Each of them has to come up with a repetitive movement and sound that they associated to some key words assigned by the facilitators and have to complement each other to create an interconnected system. The Key words give in this exercise are: Agency; Oppression; Freedom. Each word is embodied separately. At the end of the exercise ask participants how they felt in the different “machines”. Let them first reflect in pairs for 5 min and then allows few voices to speak up in the big group.

Step 2 (10 min): explain that we want to engage in a collective brainstorming exercise and draw a flower whose petals represent categories that showcase our identities as part of the society.

We give and collect examples of categories for each petal (e.g., gender, ethnic group, language, religion, sexuality, social class, age, geographic region)

Step 3 (15 min) : Participants make their flowers with their identities.

Step 4 (15 min) : Think collectively on the identities that hold the most power in society and draw them as outer petals.

Step 5 (25 min): When finished, ask them to think about the following questions and discuss in groups of 3:

- How many of your personal characteristics are different from the dominant identity?
- Which characteristics cannot be changed?
- What does this say about your own power or potential for exercising power?
- How might this influence your work as a change maker?

At the end allow one spoke person per group to share highlights from their sharing in small groups

- *Check if participants are feeling safe and comfortable throughout the activity.*
- *Time management and cues (e.g., “Use a bell to signal transitions between steps”).*

**Facilitation
Guidelines and
Tips**

- *Observing group dynamics and intervening if necessary.*
- *Encouraging inclusivity and active participation.*
- Remind participants they choose how much they want to share. No one is required to explain personal experiences.

Resources & References

- Augusto Boal – Games for Actors and Non-Actors
- <https://www.powershift.org/sites/default/files/resources/files/anti-oppression-201.pdf>
- https://movementlearning.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Part1-TV_M5_LA_-Exploring-privilege-and-rank.pdf
- <https://ulexproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/ClimateJusticePSR/PSR-Training-Manual-climate-justice-version.pdf> Pag 240;41

WORKSHOP – The Perfect Activist (doesn't exist)

Overview / Summary

The exercise „The perfect activist „comes from the topics of sustainable activism and individual/collective resilience (ability to resist and recover in crises). People who are committed to socio-ecological change and global justice are in constant contact with the multiple crises of this world, therefore often have high expectations of themselves and others. This exercise is meant for the participants to foster self-acceptance and embracing complexity and incoherences in themselves and others.

Objectives

The participants:

- ★ accept and embrace complexity within themselves
- ★ recognize the inconsistency and unattainability of (their own) requirements, which often remain unspoken.
- ★ question assumptions about hidden hierarchies regarding knowledge, skills, invulnerability, etc.
- ★ feel encouraged to work for a socio-ecological and globally just world in the long term.

Disclaimers

Questioning oneself can be very demanding and each of you should feel ready to start an open and honest dialogue with themselves before entering this exercise. If you don't feel ready it's ok, you can step out and have an observer role, and join again only if you feel like it. If you like to join the exercise but not share your reflections with the group, this is also ok.

Duration

Total 90 min :

- 10 min. energizer
- 5 min. Introduction to the workshop
- 10 min. guided visualization (bus methodology)
- 10 min. to write down/draw individually what they have seen in their buses
- 10 min. sharing in pairs what was experienced in the bus exercise
- 10 min. brainstorming “How does the perfect activist look like?”
- 20 min. guided small group reflection

- 15 min. of debriefing/closure

Number of participants

10-30

Material & Preparation

This includes:

- Circle of chairs
- 1 flipchart paper and at least 1 marker
- yoga mat or blankets to lay on the floor for the guided visualization
- Paper and pens/color pencils
- speaker with calm music
- bell
- something to keep the time

Activity plan (methods and exercises)

1. Step: Energizer identity crisis (5 min)

Ask participants to create a circle and to pair-up with their neighbor. There should be a bit of space in between the pairs. Tell the participants that from that moment on they are the person they stand next to and, when someone will call the name of them, will have to move. There is in fact one person who will not have a pair (if the group is even also the facilitator has to play) and will call names of people of the group to finally have pair. The person next to the one been called has to catch the person being called (by their name) before they reach the empty spot next to the person alone.

2. Step: Introduction (5 min)

Explain to participants that in the first part of the workshop, you will be doing an exercise called "The Bus within Us". The bus methodology invites us to see a whole bus of people within us. Imagine your mind is like a bus with lots of different passengers: your thoughts, feelings, and ideas. Some people think that to be a "grown-up," you should let only one driver (logic and reason) control the bus all the time. But that's not really how life works! if we always try to be perfectly logical and right, we miss out on learning from different ideas and dealing with life's surprises. It's okay to have a

messy, mixed-up bus—it helps us grow!

3. Step: Guided visualization (15 min)

Tell participants you will guide them into observing their internal bus. The 'bus' represents the different emotions, thoughts, and inner voices we all carry.

Ask them to find a comfortable position, sitting on a chair, on the floor, laying (have mats of blankets available), as they like, and to close their eyes. When everyone is ready, play calming music and start reading very slow the following:

“Take a deep breath. Close your eyes if you feel comfortable. Notice your body, how it feels against the chair, your feet on the ground, the rhythm of your breath. Let your thoughts slow down for a moment.

Now, imagine that inside you, there is a bus. You don't need to force an image; just let it appear in whatever way feels right. Maybe it's a real bus, or maybe it looks different. That's okay.

Slowly, step inside. Look around. Who is driving your bus? Is it you? Someone else? Maybe a part of you that feels very confident, or very cautious?

Now, notice the passengers. Some are sitting at the front, some in the middle, some at the back. Pick three passengers who feel differently about this journey. What are they thinking? What are they saying? How do they feel? excited, nervous, calm, tired?

Take a moment to sense their energy. Do they feel light or heavy? Are they full of energy or drained? Are their feelings pleasant or unpleasant?

There is no right or wrong way to experience this. Just observe. How does it feel to see yourself as a bus, carrying all these different parts?

When you're ready, take a deep breath in...and slowly exhale. Gently bring your awareness back to the room. Wiggle your fingers, stretch if you'd like, and open your eyes when you're ready.

Your bus is always with you, and you can visit it anytime.”

4. Step: Individual reflection (10 min)

Ask participants to slowly come back to reality. Ask them to grab a paper and a pen/color and provide them with 10 min of individual reflection time with the task of writing down/drawing what they visualized during the Bus exercise. If participants like leave some gentle music background.

5. Step: Sharing in pairs (10 min)

Ask participant to find a person they feel comfortable sharing with and ask them to share what they like about their experience discovering the bus. Ask them to practice active listening. Each person will have 5 min to share, then there will be a bell sound and the roles will switch.

6. Step: Brain storming (10 min)

Ask participants to come back to the circle. Tell them “We are now going to do an exercise to look at what expectations you actually have of yourselves and others in the context of your own commitment. You may be familiar with the feeling that there are people around you who simply do everything right, or at least ‘better than me’. We want to playfully reveal and express this here.”

The participants sit in a circle, and the flipchart with the drawn human figure is in the middle. The facilitator asks introductory questions and invites the participants to spend ten minutes on their own.

Example questions:

- *What can the perfect activist do?*
- *What kind of clothes does the person wear?*
- *What do they do for a living?*
- *What is the person’s everyday life like?*
- *How is the person doing?*
- *What do they need?*
- *How does the person behave towards others?*

The participants can freely associate and throw their thoughts into the round about what all claims are a perfect activist. The facilitator writes the terms around the stick figure on the flipchart. Conflicting associations are also written down. Depending on the development of the associations, the instructors can also consciously point out contradictions between the individual associations, or invite further associations, ask questions about areas that have not yet been mentioned, etc.

7. Step: small group reflection (20 min)

Divide the group in smaller groups of 4/5 participants and give them 15 minutes time to reflect on the following questions:

- *Invite feelings: What did these claims trigger in you? Which passengers of your bus get activated?*
- *Where do you notice contradictions? Is it even possible to fulfil them?*
- *What systems/thought patterns do you recognize in these demands that you actually want to criticize, change or abolish? (e.g. meritocracy, competition, etc.)*

8. Step: Conclusion (15 min)

Ask the group to join in plenary, ask them to physically shake all these expectations off.

Invite them to mingle around the room, and when they cross a person, say a word or do a gesture of appreciation.

After 5 minutes, reshape the circle, distribute pen and paper and ask everyone to write 3 supportive commitments or reminders for yourself they have from themselves they got as takeaways from the workshop, take a picture and put it as a screen saver of their phones if they like.

Debriefing and Reflection

Suggestion of questions:

- *How did it feel to explore your internal bus? Did any part of the experience surprise you?*
- *How can you support yourself in moments when different parts of you (your bus passengers) are in conflict?*
- *What is one way you can be kinder to yourself in your activism or daily life?*
- *How do you want to integrate what you've learned today into your future actions?*

Facilitation Guidelines and Tips

It has proven useful for one facilitator to moderate while the other facilitator writes down the associations made by the participants.

The method enables reflection on how unattainable, stress-inducing and often contradictory these demands can be. It gives the participants access to the topic of resilience and invites them to speak. In addition, it triggers an "unlearning" of one's own demands, both individually and at group or

collective level.

The method can be used in various fields of activity, e.g. voluntary services, educational work, role issues in groups, etc.

Give the participants time to feel their way into the respective demands. Depending on the context, further questions about the perfect activist can be asked in the room. E.g.: “What kind of clothes does the person wear? How do they eat? Where does their knowledge come from? How does the person behave towards others?” The questions and answers can be exaggerated. It is important to demystify the claims that arise afterwards and to realize in a reality check that they are not our common goal at all, that they are unfulfillable anyway and probably contradictory in themselves. It can often take a while for participants to realize that it’s about questioning these demands. If this leads to a noticeable moment of relief in the group, for example, it can be useful to name and address this in the reflection.

Resources & References

Adapted from:

<https://decolonialfutures.net/portfolio/the-bus/>

<https://endlich-wachstum.de/en/method/perfekter-aktivistin/>

WORKSHOP – Living the Future Now. Prefiguration as Activism.

Overview / Summary

This workshop invites participants to explore "prefiguration", the practice of embodying the desired future in their current lives, communities, and systems. Through visualization, community mapping, and a critical reflection on power dynamics, participants move from abstract ideals to concrete daily actions. The session blends personal embodiment exercises with a structural analysis of inclusion and privilege, empowering youth workers to integrate prefigurative practices into their activism immediately.

Objectives

- ★ To help participants connect physically and emotionally with a future version of themselves who already lives their values.
- ★ To explore the components of a "community-centered" life, focusing on assets, trust, care, and contribution.
- ★ To critically reflect on lines of power, privilege, and inclusion within group dynamics using the "Across the Line" exercise.
- ★ To generate concrete, actionable ideas for integrating prefigurative practices into daily life and work.

Learning Outcomes

- + Participants can articulate a vision of their "Future Self" aligned with their values across personal, relational, and professional domains.
- + Participants identify specific "gifts" and leadership practices they can contribute to a community, based on asset-based development.
- + Participants gain awareness of their own position regarding privilege, language, and belonging within international groups.
- + Participants leave with a personal "shift plan" (small or large) to start embodying their desired future today.

Disclaimers

- **Emotional Depth:** The visualization and "Across the Line" exercises may bring up feelings of vulnerability, imposter syndrome, or discomfort regarding privilege. A safe space is essential.
- **Language Sensitivity:** The "Across the Line" exercise includes statements about language confidence; facilitators must ensure this is handled with care to avoid shaming non-native speakers.
- **Voluntary Participation:** Participants are reminded they can step out of the "line" or skip sharing if they feel overwhelmed.
- **Context:** This is a reflective space, not a therapy session; facilitators should know when to refer to professional support if deep trauma arises.

Approx. 2 Hours

Duration

Part 1: Embodied Future Self (30 min)

- 10 min: Visualization/Journaling (Future Self)
- 10 min: Sharing in pairs/small groups
- 10 min: Harvesting ideas (Plenary)

Part 2: The (He)Art of Community (45 min)

- 15 min: Community group centered discussion
- 8 min: Asset-based community development (Gifts)
- 10 min: Trust, belonging, and value of care
- 5 min: Rituals and symbols
- 10 min: Participation, membership, and contribution (Leadership practices)

Part 3: Across the Line & Power Dynamics (45 min)

- 15 min: "Across the Line" exercise (Physical movement)
- 10 min: Debrief (Reflection on standing and feelings)
- 10 min: Discussion on Power, Rank, and Privilege
- 10 min: Shared leadership and types of leadership

Part 4: Closing & Integration (10 min)

- Final commitment to action

Number of Participants

Ideal: 15–25 participants.

Minimum: 10 (to allow for meaningful group dynamics).

Maximum: 30 (requires careful management of the "line" exercise).

Material & Preparation

Space:

- Large indoor room with space to stand in a circle and a long clear line on the floor (tape or rope) for the "Across the Line" exercise.
- Quiet corner for journaling/visualization.

Materials:

- Journals, pens, and colored pencils.
- Flipchart or whiteboard for harvesting ideas.
- Tape or rope to mark the "Line of Power" (from "Very True" to "Not at all True").
- Printed list of "Across the Line" statements (optional, for reference).
- Soft background music for visualization.

Activity Plan (Methods and Exercises)

1. Embodied Future Self (30 min):

1. **Visualization:** Invite participants to stand or sit comfortably. Guide them to imagine it is five years from now, fully aligned with their values. Prompt them to visualize: Morning routine, food/clothing, self-care, relationships, community living, work, and daily resistance to injustice.

2. **Journaling/Drawing:** Participants spend 5-7 minutes writing or drawing their vision.
3. **Sharing:** In pairs, participants share their experience and identify:
 - (a) Ways they are *already* living this, and
 - (b) Small/large shifts they can make.
4. **Harvest:** Plenary sharing to collect interesting ways to embody values in daily life.

2. The (He)Art of Community (45 min):

1. **Community Centered:** Discuss what a community group looks like (15 min).
2. **Asset-Based Development:** Participants identify their own "gifts" and what they bring to the table (8 min).
3. **Trust & Belonging:** Brief discussion on value and care (10 min).
4. **Rituals & Symbols:** Introduce the role of rituals in community (5 min).
5. **Contribution:** List leadership practices and contributions to leave in the "whale" (group space) (10 min).

3. Across the Line Exercise (45 min):

1. **Setup:** Mark a line on the floor. One end is "Very True for Me," the other "Not at all True for Me."
2. **Movement:** Read statements one by one (e.g., "I feel comfortable speaking up," "My cultural background is respected," "I worry about being misunderstood"). Participants physically move to the spot on the line that represents their truth.
3. **Observation:** Allow participants to see where others stand without judgment.
4. **Debrief:** Ask: "What did you notice about where you stood?", "How did it feel to be near the 'power' end vs. the 'vulnerable' end?", "Were there surprises?".
5. **Analysis:** Discuss patterns related to language, culture, and background. Transition to a discussion on Power, Rank, and Privilege.
6. **Leadership:** Briefly explore different types of shared leadership.

4. Closing:

Invite participants to commit to one small action from the "Future Self" visualization to implement this week.

Debriefing and Reflection

Guiding Questions:

- "What was the most surprising thing you realized about your 'Future Self'?"
- "How did it feel to physically see the diversity of experiences in the 'Across the Line' exercise?"
- "Where did you feel strong, and where did you feel vulnerable during the line exercise?"
- "How does the concept of 'prefiguration' change your approach to activism?"
- "What is one concrete step you can take tomorrow to live your values?"

Format:

Start with pair shares for the visualization, then move to a whole-group circle for the "Across the Line" debrief to ensure diverse voices are heard.

**Facilitation
Guidelines and
Tips**

- **Safety in the Line:** Emphasize that there are no "right" answers. The goal is awareness, not judgment. If someone feels exposed, remind them they can step back or close their eyes.
- **Language Sensitivity:** When reading statements about language confidence, pause to acknowledge the difficulty for non-native speakers and validate their presence.
- **Time Management:** The "Across the Line" exercise can run long if debriefing gets deep. Keep the initial movement phase strict (15 min) to ensure enough time for the power discussion.
- **Inclusivity:** Ensure the "Future Self" prompts are broad enough to accommodate different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- **Energy:** If the group feels heavy after the "Across the Line" exercise, use a quick energizer or a moment of silence before moving to the leadership discussion.

**Resources &
References**

- **Prefigurative Politics:** Concepts from social movement theory (e.g., David Graeber, "Direct Action").
- **Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD):** Kretzmann & McKnight.
- **Privilege & Power:** Peggy McIntosh ("White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack") or similar frameworks on intersectionality.
- **Non-Violent Communication (NVC):** For the "care and solidarity" section.
- **The Work That Reconnects:** Joanna Macy (for the future self-visualization).