

Validation

Validation is a 90 minutes workshop about well-being.

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Feel free to adapt to your needs / context. Timing + pointers are from personal experience of running this workshop and feedback from participants. *Please attribute your source.*

Context :

Introduction and video of "validation", followed by a **creative process** to see and **appreciate people as they are.**

In order to face our daunting task to make the world better, not only "product" but also process and people matter. Movements mostly run on volunteers, who are diverse. Therefore it's important to recognise and voice the positive in people and (their) work.

Materials :

- Beamer + speakers
- Validation shortmovie (until 3min57)
<https://vimeo.com/2485018>
(recommend to download and avoid internet issues)
- 1 paper + 1 pen / pencil per participant
- Enough room + chairs so people can work in pairs

Workshop can be done with **2 to 40 participants**. With a larger group, more time is needed in between exercisers, to explain but also to regain calm / silence. (Over 20 suggest confident facilitator, who gave workshop before with smaller group.)

Try to schedule the session with **free time afterwards**.

Preparation :

Setup the room, so participants can watch to the short movie (after introduction from the facilitator). Also make sure not too much time would be lost with rearranging into pairs (e.g. in a small room move and stack the tables).

Have papers and pens / pencils ready at hand.

Optionally prepare some instrumental background music.

Keep in mind, the idea is to try work in silence, so distractions like loud environments and lots of passage are not optimal. (Though the workshop was once successfully done outdoors, with a very small group.)



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Workshop steps & timing :

05 min Welcome

- Saying hello
- Explain the “agenda” of the workshop (*very important for some people*)
 - > I usually say it'll be a short movie, followed by working in a pair that remains the same over the entire workshop. I usually add it'll be several exercises done in SILENCE, each followed by a short discussion.
 - > I usually mention it's a process, invite them to dive in and experience it.
- Explain the **topic and importance of well-being**. (*personal story approach*)

AIM : get the group comfortable and gain trust as a facilitator.

- > Be careful with “expectation management” : **any experience / outcome is good**.
- > Talking much “powerful emotions” might create a feeling they aren't doing it right.

05 min Movie

- Show the shortmovie (until 3:57)

05 min Pair up

- Get into pairs.
 - > It works if people have recently met or if they have been best friends for years, and everything in between. Though the experience will be different.
 - > It doesn't matter if people have done the workshop before, another person or even another time, something else will come out of it.
- Repeat we'll do several exercises in silence, each followed by a short discussion.
 - > Silence is important for the “depth” of the workshop, though needs building through the different exercises, after all it's “uncommon” what they are doing.

05 min Minute look + how was it

- Both people of the pair look each other in silence in each others eyes for 1 min.
- Might need a gentle reminder “try to do it in silence”.
- In their pair, talk about the experience : how did you feel ?

10 min Draw face + look at it

- Both people of the pair draw each others face, WITHOUT looking to the paper.
 - > Some reassurance can be found as the other is in the same boat / challenge.
- In the drawing, highlight features that stand out (glasses, freckles, etc)
- Likely a reminder on “try to work in silence” & “keep silent when you're done”.

[drawing takes about 3 minutes]

- Look at your drawing and show it to the other person in your pair.
- Talk about the experience : what was your approach, how did you feel, etc ?

05 min Minute look + differences

- Both people of the pair look each other in silence in each others eyes for 1 min.
 - > I usually stretch this 1 minute, at least 15 sec extra or more.
 - > How much stretching depends on the group and the feel of them.
- Unlikely to need reminder “try to do it in silence” (though repeat before starting).



- In their pair, talk about the experience : how did you feel ?
 - > Facilitator confesses that 1 minute was actually [however long it took].
 - > Focus conversations on the differences between this and previous minute.

10 min Send yourself, the other writes what they receive

- Taking turns now : one is the sender and the other the receiver (then switch)
 - > The idea is to "send yourself" to the other : who you are as a person, your character, your specifics, your likes / dislikes, etc. The other takes notes.
 - > It can help if the sender gets conscious about themselves and their emotions, but focus on long term (like half a year span) not the momentarily. {E.g. relationship ended so you've been sad for months, but not if you had a fight 1h ago.}
 - > Listen to feeling and intuition, try not to think too much. {E.g. ignore impressions of just meeting or information of knowing a person over time.}
 - > Make sure everyone understands the task before starting.
(Maybe a reminder of silence, even when done, respecting others continuing.)
 - > Depending on the group, it might be useful / needed to mention (or stress) the focus on positive attributes. With some groups that will be automatic. With other groups it can be interesting to leave open, inviting a deeper nuanced story.

20 min Talk to each other about what was written

- Sometimes emotional energy needs to unload now, so it might be a moment of hugging / crying / laughing, so passively or actively welcome that anything can.
 - > Once i had a group that wanted to touch / hug every step, which i said is not the idea, but announced here "now is the moment for your affection".
- In their pairs, talk about how it was for them and -more importantly- about what was received, compare with what was sent or if the sender recognises it otherwise. Is it accurate ? Is it complete ?
 - > So partly it's about the experience and functioning of the exercise, but mostly it's about deepening the understanding between those 2 people.
- Sometimes people can and want to have much longer conversations, which is great. But it's also important to conclude the workshop, both for the group and for the facilitator. (And then they can continue in free time.)

10 min Debrief circle

- Everyone gets back into a big circle, to reflect over the workshop.
 - > Share key elements of their experience or feedback towards the facilitator.

05 min Wrap up

- A few words by the facilitator to finalise the session.
 - > Usually i thank them for being part of the workshop and being open to try.
 - > Usually i congratulate about their experience, if possible linked to observations.
- It can be useful the facilitator offers to be available somewhere afterwards.

*From walking among participants, you can sometimes "sense" how it's going :
opening-up, emotions / energy flowing, connection, etc.
Every group is different, everyone can be themselves, everything is welcome.*

