



## **Video Transcript: Setting the Tone for a Positive and Supportive Group Session**

**Katrina (00:01):** Wondering how I got here? I didn't know what to expect facilitating a group session with youth. Then I watched the Bringing Content to Live Video Series, and now I feel comfortable. [Music]

**Audio Description (00:12):** Bringing Content to Life. Techniques for Effective Group Facilitation Video Series. A name tag lists the name Katrina.

**Katrina (00:20):** Setting the Tone for a Positive and Supportive Group Session. It's common for participants in a group session to feel hesitant to speak and unsure how others will respond to what they say. By taking the time to create a positive and supportive environment in their group session, facilitators can help ensure that participants feel comfortable, share openly, and work together. This video explores strategies facilitators can use to set the tone for a positive and supportive session.

This video is part of a series on: Facilitating and Managing Groups. Facilitation is the act or process of leading or moderating a discussion. This video series focuses on facilitation in a group session, like a meeting, training, team-building session, or educational program. Participants can sense when facilitators feel interested in and comfortable discussing the topic of the session. Before every session, take time to think through the topic, and if needed, learn more about it. You don't necessarily need to be an expert; having a basic understanding is often enough.

Begin a session by welcoming the group, introducing yourself, and giving space for participants to introduce themselves. Acknowledge everyone and emphasize how valuable their contribution to the group will be.

If it feels appropriate for your session, consider establishing expectations or ground rules for respectful behavior. An Icebreaker is an activity or game designed to welcome and warm-up participants in a group session. Icebreakers help participants get to know one another, build rapport, and create a sense of community. Icebreakers can be a helpful way to start any group session, including a session of a group that has met in the past. However, I find Icebreakers especially helpful for kicking off group sessions in which participants don't know each other well, or they're discussing a new or unfamiliar topic. There are many Icebreakers to choose from, depending on the group and time allotted for the session. Facilitators may consider using multiple Icebreakers. Examples of Icebreakers include, Two Truths and a Lie also known as Fact-finding. Each participant lists three things about themselves; two are true, and one is a lie; others must guess which is which.

**Audio Description (02:39 ):** Scene changes to a student standing, speaking to the class during an activity.

**Tyrone (02:44):** My name is Tyrone, I'm 16, I wear a size 12 shoe, and my mom drives a Tesla.

**Speaker 1 (02:51):** Okay.

**Speaker 2 (02:53):** I don't think he's 16, there is no way.

**Speaker 3 (02:57):** I don't think you wear the size 12.

**Speaker 1 (02:29):** Tell us what the two truths are.

**Tyrone (03:00):** The truth is, I'm 16, and I do wear a size 12.

[laughter]

**Speaker 1 (03:05):** So his mom does not drive a Tesla, okay.

**Audio Description (03:07):** Scene returns to Katrina as she speaks to the audience.

**Katrina (03:11):** People Bingo, give each participant a bingo grid with random descriptions. For example, likes cats better than dogs. Participants then go around the room and find other participants who fit each of the descriptions. The goal is to fill up their bingo grid with participant names. Would you rather...? Ask participants a hypothetical question as a way to get to know them, for example. Would you rather be able to talk with animals or speak all foreign languages?

**Audio Description (03:38):** Scene changes to students sitting at a group table, listening to a facilitator during an activity.

**Speaker 1 (03:44):** Would you rather go to a Beyoncé concert or Nicki Minaj concert?

**Speaker 4 (03:50):** Beyoncé.

**Speaker 1 (03:51):** Beyoncé? Would you rather go to a basketball game, NBA game, or NFL game?

**Speaker 2 (03:59):** Uh, NBA game.

**Speaker 1 (04:00):** Okay.

**Audio Description (04:01):** Scene returns to Katrina as she speaks to the audience.

**Katrina (04:04):** Thought-provoking questions asked participants a thought-provoking question such as: If you were given a million dollars to create a tool to teach people about reproductive health, what would you create? Even though you go into every session with a plan, it's important to be able to adapt in real-time. During a session, notice any unanticipated needs, interests, or challenges that come up among participants in your group. Then, when possible, adjust your activities so that participants feel engaged, heard, and respected. It's common, especially during long sessions, for participants to experience moments of low energy. Low-energy moments may be more likely to occur: after a break, long lecture, or a difficult discussion.

An Energizer is an activity designed to boost energy during these moments and make learning easier and more enjoyable. Specifically, facilitators can use Energizers to: foster interaction, stimulate creative thinking, form groups, illustrate new concepts, introduce material, increase movement, give participants a mental break. Examples of Energizers include: Walk and Talks- assign pairs, and ask them to step outside for a 15 to 30-minute walk while talking to each other. While the conversation usually kicks off by itself, it could be a good idea to give the pair a reflective question to talk about.

Musical activities- for example, play 5 seconds of a few different songs and see if any participants can identify the song, or ask if anyone feels comfortable singing a song or playing the guitar. Reflection in writing, give participants time to independently reflect on and write down what they've learned or discussed in the session. Note that some activities may be used as Energizers or Icebreakers.

Remember, when a facilitator sets the tone for a positive and supportive session, participants are more likely to feel comfortable and engaged. Which often leads to more robust learning and discussion.

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