**Discussion Groups**

Discussion Groups provide the opportunity to create a community of peers who support and challenge each other. The process is based on the view that we learn best when we have a real issue to resolve and when what we are trying to change or address is something that we are responsible for.

6-8 individuals meet to discuss real challenges individuals are facing.

The group are not tasked with solving a problem for someone else, but helping them resolve the issue themselves. This is through effective questioning and reflection and if appropriate the suggestion of options. The challenges/issues do not require specialist knowledge from group members.

**Benefits of taking part:**

* Time for reflection, making conclusions and planning in a confidential and safe environment
* Insights from peers who bring their different experiences and backgrounds to support and challenge each other
* A forum for developing your coaching skills

**Roles within the group:**

**Facilitator:** the facilitator is the meeting’s guide. Their role is to hold the group to the meeting process, manage time within the discussion, and act as reflector helping the participants consider their questioning, listening and feedback skills.

**Presenter:** this is the group member whose challenge is going to be the focus for the discussion. This is not a formal presentation. The process provides the presenter time to have some individual and group thinking on your challenge with the aim of achieving some progress on the topic.

**Group member:** Everyone participating is a group member. All group members are expected to be active participants in the process through effective questioning and reflection and if appropriate the suggestion of options.

**Process for Discussion Groups**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Process** | **Timing** | **Content** |
| *First Meet Only – if required: Extended Introductions* | *45 mins* | *5 mins to review and agree Ground Rules**10 mins to prepare and then each group member has 5 mins to present an extended introduction**First meets will only have time for one presenter in a two hour slot* |
| Arriving round | 20 mins | Previous presenter provides update on actions taken since last meeting. Group members can share actions they have taken if appropriate.Move around the group allowing each person to fill in the blank in this statement “If I were to present today, I would present on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.”  |
| Bidding | 5 mins | Group to then agree on the two presenters for this meeting and the order. Group to ensure that it is not the same presenters at each meeting (if possible).  |
| Presenting | 10 mins | Presenter to speak uninterrupted about the topic, describing their challenge. The topic must be something that they are personally involved in and have some responsibility for changing/solving/improving.  |
| Questioning | 10 mins | The group can ask clarifying questions to help them familarise themselves with the topic. The questions are not about providing a solution. The presenter can choose how to answer the question but may also choose not to respond to any question asked. At the end of the clarifying questions, the presenter then leaves the circle and sits outside to listen and observe. |
| Discussion | 10 mins | Group to discuss the topic in greater detail, unpicking this, querying it and potentially making suggestions for action. |
| Review | 5 mins | Presenter is invited back into the group. They then have the floor to talk about their experience in listening on the group, what they observed, what was most useful and what they will take away.  |
| Reflections | 5 mins | Each group member has one minute to share their reflections on the discussion and share their learning / thoughts / pose any unasked questions or offer advice as appropriate. |
| Repeat  | 40 mins | From Presenting to Reflections. It may be beneficial to have a 5 minute comfort break between presenters. |
| Process Review (as required) | 10 mins | Discuss experience and what worked well and not so well, any concerns or feedback on the process or each stage. Each person to reflect on their experience during the meeting. |