



3. HORS-PISTE ACTIVITY

Specific workshop objectives

At the end of the workshop, the student will be able to:

- Step outside of their comfort zone in a non-school group activity;
- Expose themselves "in vivo" to more anxiety-provoking situations;
- Experiment with the concepts learned in previous meetings;
- Create ties with the other participants.

How the workshop works

Welcome the students and present the workshop objectives and how it will work.

A. The week in review

1. Explain to the students that you will review the challenge during the next workshop.

B. Mindful eating (10 min.)

1. Explain that they will now experience tasting a food mindfully. They will have to pay careful attention to their physical sensations as they try to eat mindfully. Explain that we rarely take the time to slowly taste our food and that when we eat mindfully, we sometimes realize that a particular food tastes much sweeter than we thought or that a food we eat without thinking has a pleasant texture and a taste we particularly enjoy.
2. Pass out a food of your choice, such as popcorn, gumdrops, or dried fruit. Observations can involve many senses: what we see, what we hear, what we touch, what we smell and... what we taste.
3. Guide the students with these statements:
 - Pick up the food and observe its weight and size, shape and colour; smell it and think

about what the smell reminds you of.

- Can you feel your saliva and taste buds kicking in?
 - Take a bite of the food, leaving half between your fingers, and pay attention to your teeth as they cut through the food; take the time to chew and fully taste that half of the food. Feel that same half slide down your throat as you swallow it.
 - Smell the other half; chew and taste it, paying attention to the various sensations it produces. Close your eyes and try to remember all the pleasant or unpleasant sensations triggered by the tasting, without judging yourself for any of them.
4. Explain that mindful eating can transform the simple act of eating into a rich sensory experience if we take the time and effort to tap into all the sensations. Wrap up the activity by reminding the students about the importance of the following points, emphasizing the need to not judge themselves:
- Before I start eating, I take the time to appreciate the smells and colours of the food.
 - I try to focus more on the action of eating, instead of doing something else at the same time.
 - I stop eating when I'm full, even if I'm eating something I really like.
 - I take my time while eating; I taste and savour each food.

C. It's time to think outside the box! (60 min.)

1. Do the chosen activity using the complementary sheet.

D. What did I get out of it? (15 min.)

1. Ask the students about their experiences during the activity. How did you feel about the activity? You can ask some of the questions below to get them talking. Keep the discussion moving by telling the students what you observed as they were doing the activity:
- Did you step outside of your comfort zone? If so, how?
 - How did it make you feel? What things did you observe about yourself (emotions, sensations, thoughts, behaviours)?
 - Did you try new things? If not, how could you do this the next time?
 - Did you think about the situation differently, less dramatically, less judgmentally? If not, how could you reformulate some of the thoughts that overwhelmed you, held you back, or prevented you from trying?
 - Did you reach out to other people? If not, were there opportunities when you could have done so?
 - Were you proud of yourself for any reason?
 - Did you learn anything today?
 - Did you observe any strengths or positive qualities in yourself or the other students?



- Did you feel more comfortable, less nervous, more confident? How do you explain this?
- Did you have fun? Were you fully present? What helped you?
- Would you be willing to take the next step, another challenge?

E. This week's challenge (5 min.)

1. Explain that this week's challenge (which is also in their *Handy student guide*) is to try to identify other situations that make them feel good or that increase their anxiety. Explain, as needed.

Tell the students that they will need pencil crayons for the next workshop.



COMPLEMENTARY SHEET

HORS-PISTE activities

What's the point?

The main objective of the HORS-PISTE activities is to allow the students to try new things, with your guidance, outside of their normal environment, hence the name HORS-PISTE. These activities will allow them to:

- Step outside of their comfort zone in a non-school group activity;
- Expose themselves "in vivo" to more anxiety-provoking situations;
- Experiment with the concepts learned in previous meetings;
- Create ties with the other participants.

During the program, students are required to step outside of their comfort zone, learn new behaviours, and expose themselves to anxiety-provoking situations. These activities are an opportunity for them to safely test out new situations, with your guidance and with support from the other students.

It's not always easy for young people to recognize the situations that make them anxious or the behaviours they adopt in these situations. These activities are an opportunity for you to observe them, in order to then help them become more aware of their reactions and ultimately improve their capacity for introspection and self-awareness.

The HORS-PISTE activities give you materials and concrete examples that you can use during the workshops. Through their interactions, body language, and behaviours, the students will often reveal more about themselves than during most discussions.

These activities are an opportunity to test the concepts seen during the workshops, which significantly increases the chances that the students will adopt these new behaviours after the program (Furman and Sibthorp, 2013).

Since each student is different, with unique challenges, it's important to identify in what way the experience challenges them. For example, it may seem more obvious to challenge students who are more socially anxious. Simply being in a group provides opportunities. A student with performance anxiety, but who is very comfortable trying new things, for example, will need to think about their quest for perfection, their fear of being judged when seen with others, and their ability to experience things for enjoyment versus results.

It's also an opportunity to encourage mutual support, since not everyone has the same



challenges. Experiencing something together builds relationships, and these relationships lead to mutual support and possibilities. During reviews, encourage the students to interact with each other.

These activities will allow the students to experience successes, as well as learn about themselves, learn to observe themselves, and learn to recognize and welcome their experiences without judgment. As Nelson Mandela said: *"I never lose. I either win or I learn."*

Reviewing, reflecting on, and discussing the experiences are the keys to getting the students to learn from them. It's an opportunity for them to reflect on what they've learned and the challenges they encountered, to identify areas for improvement, and to rethink things to deepen their understanding of certain concepts (Chapman *et al.*, 1995). To help you with your observations and review, here are some sample questions you can ask the students.

- Did you step outside of your comfort zone? If so, in which situations?
- How did it make you feel? What things did you observe about yourself (emotions, sensations, thoughts, behaviours)?
- Did you try new things? If not, how could you do this the next time?
- Did you think about the situation differently, less dramatically, less judgmentally? If not, how could you reformulate some of the thoughts that overwhelmed you, held you back, or prevented you from trying?
- Did you reach out to other people? If not, were there opportunities when you could have done so?
- Were you proud of yourself for any reason?
- Did you learn anything today?
- Did you observe any strengths or positive qualities in yourself or the other students?
- Did you feel more comfortable, less nervous, more confident? How do you explain this?
- Did you have fun? Were you fully present? What helped you?
- Would you be willing to take the next step, another challenge?

What's involved?

There are a few options you can choose from, but you're also free to create or adapt your own activities. The possibilities are endless. It all depends on how willing and open you are. The HORS-PISTE activities can be very straightforward, but if they get you, as the facilitator, to step outside of your comfort zone, then you'll also find it much easier to work with the students.

The key to the HORS-PISTE activities is that they all share the same objective: to create informal situations where the students can observe each other and expose themselves to



potentially anxiety-provoking situations.

Examples of activities:

- Do an outdoor activity such as a hike or a snowball fight;
- Watch a short news report and then talk about the topic and their impressions;
- Make a short video featuring a message of encouragement for future Expedition program participants or describing the experience to family or friends;
- Play a board game that involves little or no sharing of materials;
- Organize a “show and tell” session; each student will have to introduce the others to a favourite object or experience, for example, their favourite music, book, or hobby. You can also introduce a theme, such as “something I’m proud of” or “my biggest dream.”

