



THE BIG AMNESTY SKILL SHARE

HEALTHY GROUPS 1

INTRODUCE A NEW DYNAMIC

Amnesty groups meet to get things done, so a lot of time is spent on **the task**. Healthy groups also pay attention to group **processes** and **dynamics** – a good meeting means everyone wants to come back next time.

Sometimes groups get stuck in a bit of a rut – the same people offer to do the same tasks, the same people do most of the talking, sometimes it feels like not everyone is enthusiastic about a decision... so how about trying to:

COMMUNICATE DIFFERENTLY

Try out a different role
- hands up those who normally have a lot to say! Try just listening for the next discussion item. How did it feel?

Change the way you sit
– what about in a circle? How about moving places for different items? You'll be amazed that such a simple thing will generate a bit more energy.

If there are relative newcomers, is there someone to pair up with them to help with a task?

Ask if everyone understands and agrees with what's been decided. Ask who has a different suggestion.

HEALTHY GROUPS

IDENTIFY SOME NEW ROLES

It's not easy to chair, lead, facilitate, summarise, keep notes of all the suggestions and decisions, ensure everyone is involved and keep an eye on the time. So how about splitting these up sometimes? Anyone can have a go and it might seem less intimidating than taking on the role of secretary, press officer etc.

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| Someone who isn't facilitating or chairing a discussion could listen and watch. Is everyone actively involved, does anyone seem puzzled or bored? Make suggestions as to how to avoid these problems in future. | <p>Ask someone else to chair a meeting, or part of a meeting, or facilitate one discussion. Suggest they deliberately try a completely different style for one session. Give them some notice though!</p> <p>This doesn't mean someone else becomes the group chairperson, it invites others to take some responsibility for ensuring the meeting goes well.</p> |
| <p>VIBES WATCHER</p> <p>Some enjoy quietly recording points and decisions on a flip chart. This can help others follow the discussion and decisions. Ask for someone to note all the ideas on a flip chart during a discussion – read them through at the end and all tick the best one.</p> | <p>SWAPPING 'CHAIRS' - FINDING A FACILITATOR</p> <p>NOTE TAKER</p> <p>The time keeper draws attention to the agreed time frame and keeps the group to it – tell people when there's only a few minutes left for a discussion to be concluded, or get them to negotiate how to extend it.</p> |

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Even group members who have been coming to an Amnesty group for years may not know each other well – sometimes you discover that a hidden talent would have been useful. And of course new members won't tell you all about their skills and knowledge unless you ask. So you could try talking in pairs and mapping out some contacts and connections, vary the headings and make sure some are light-hearted - are any of these potentially useful in your campaigning?

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| What I am good at, at work or home | What I like doing in my 'spare time' |
| What 'luxury item' I would take to a desert island | Something exciting/nice that happened to me in the last year |