

INCLUSIVE NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUP PLAYBOOK

Ways to foster relationships between
diverse groups and individuals

A Collaboration Between IPS and Solve n+1



Welcome to

Inclusive Neighbourhood Group (ING) Playbook

A resource tool designed to help various groups, ranging from small groups of residents and grassroots, to non-profit organisations and corporations, embark on their inclusion efforts.

It seeks to:

1. Unpack the term 'inclusion'
2. Outline the stages of inclusion
3. Provide a list of possible ING activities

How was this playbook conceptualised?

The contents of this playbook were derived from an ING prototype that we ran and tested. The ING prototype consisted of persons with disability (PWDs) and non-PWDs. It was co-created with organisations, individuals, and a few members of the ING who advocate for inclusion.

As we prototyped, we sought to answer two key questions:



How can the community foster trust and build relationships with each other, holding the space to build understanding and embrace differences?



How might we look out for each other as we pursue the development of our community spaces?



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ING seeks to facilitate the co-creation of inclusive activities among small residential groups and organically foster better integration of individuals (e.g. PWDs, caregivers, seniors, single parents, low-income families, etc) who will likely benefit from greater community awareness, acceptance, and support.



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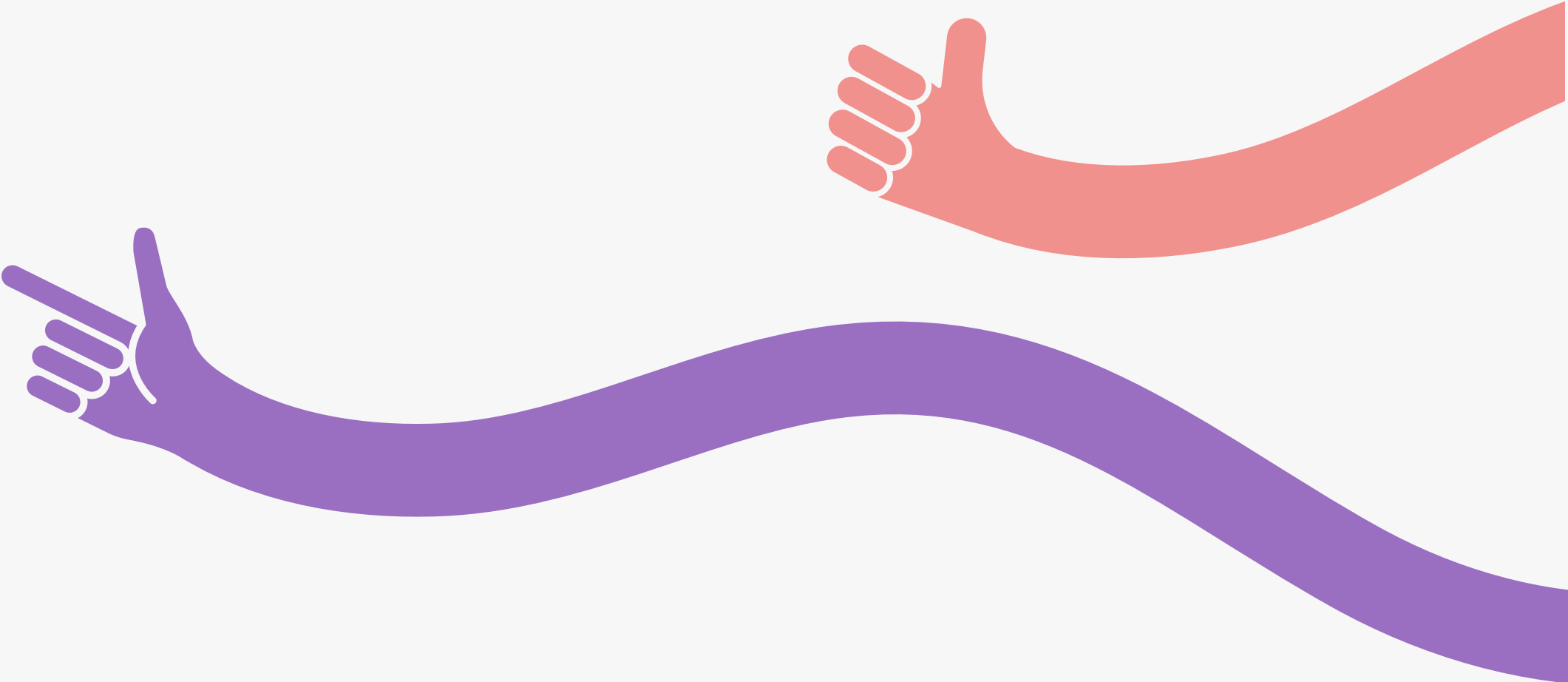
Unpacking the term 'inclusion'

Inclusion means making sure that everyone feels welcomed and accepted, no matter who they are or where they come from.

It extends beyond treating everyone with kindness and respect, to making sure that everyone has an equal chance to participate and contribute. Inclusion is about creating a community where everyone feels valued and supported, and where differences are appreciated.

Inclusion should ideally be 'unremarkable'; in the designing of new products, services, or spaces and activities, consideration of different users (e.g. neurodiverse and neurodivergent; PWDs and non-PWDs; young and the elderly) should come naturally.

As part of 'unremarkable' inclusion, we should strive to eliminate systemic barriers that prevent certain individuals or groups from fully participating, as well as provide them with access to resources and support.



Ultimately, inclusion is about creating a more just and equitable world where everyone can thrive and reach their full potential.

Stages of Inclusion

The **5** stages of inclusion are a revolving progression

We begin with awareness, oscillate towards mindfulness as we progress towards more inclusive practices, and make systemic changes for better access to equity and justice. At each stage, feedback loops and introspections occur, which helps to reinforce positive practices, and correct practices done with good intentions but are harmful.



At the awareness stage,

individuals become conscious of their biases and the potential for discrimination.

This may involve recognizing the impact of unconscious bias, stereotypes, and other forms of prejudice.

At the mindfulness stage,

individuals are more intentional about their actions and seek to understand the experiences of others.

This may involve active listening, seeking out diverse perspectives, and empathising with others.

At the inclusive practices stage,

individuals take concrete actions to create an inclusive environment.

This may involve implementing policies that promote equity and diversity, creating opportunities for underrepresented groups, and ensuring that everyone has access to resources and support.

At the equity stage,

individuals strive to bridge systemic gaps that create unequal access to opportunities and resources.

This may involve addressing issues such as pay equity, representation, and access to education and healthcare.

At the justice stage,

individuals work to facilitate systemic change that promotes fairness and equal treatment for all.

This may involve advocating for policy changes, supporting community organisations, and taking collective action to address social issues.

ING Playbook current aim is to facilitate activities and conversations that allow us to reach stage 3

Stages of Inclusion

Some might prioritise 'awareness' in communication objectives in outreach and advocacy work for specific target beneficiaries. We should approach these communications carefully to avoid treating inclusion as a mere checklist exercise or a fulfilment of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). This prevents marginalisation and tokenistic inclusion of minor groups.

	Awareness	Mindfulness	Inclusive Practices	Striving For Equity	Justice
DEFINITION	Individuals become conscious of their biases and the potential for discrimination.	Individuals are more intentional about their actions and seek to understand the experiences of others.	Taking concrete actions to create an inclusive environment.	Bridging systemic gaps that create unequal access to opportunities and resources.	Facilitating systemic change that promotes fairness and equal treatment for all.
EXAMPLE	An autistic informs you that stability and predictability is preferred when attending events.	While planning an activity, you consider all the participants and who may be involved.	You adopted the considerations of participants, pre-empting the autistics when required.	You help others understand the need to consider participation profiles, and ensure that these events adopt inclusive practices for autistics.	Others, besides you, are informed of how activities should be planned, and adopt such practices for autistics without your involvement.

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Inclusive Activities

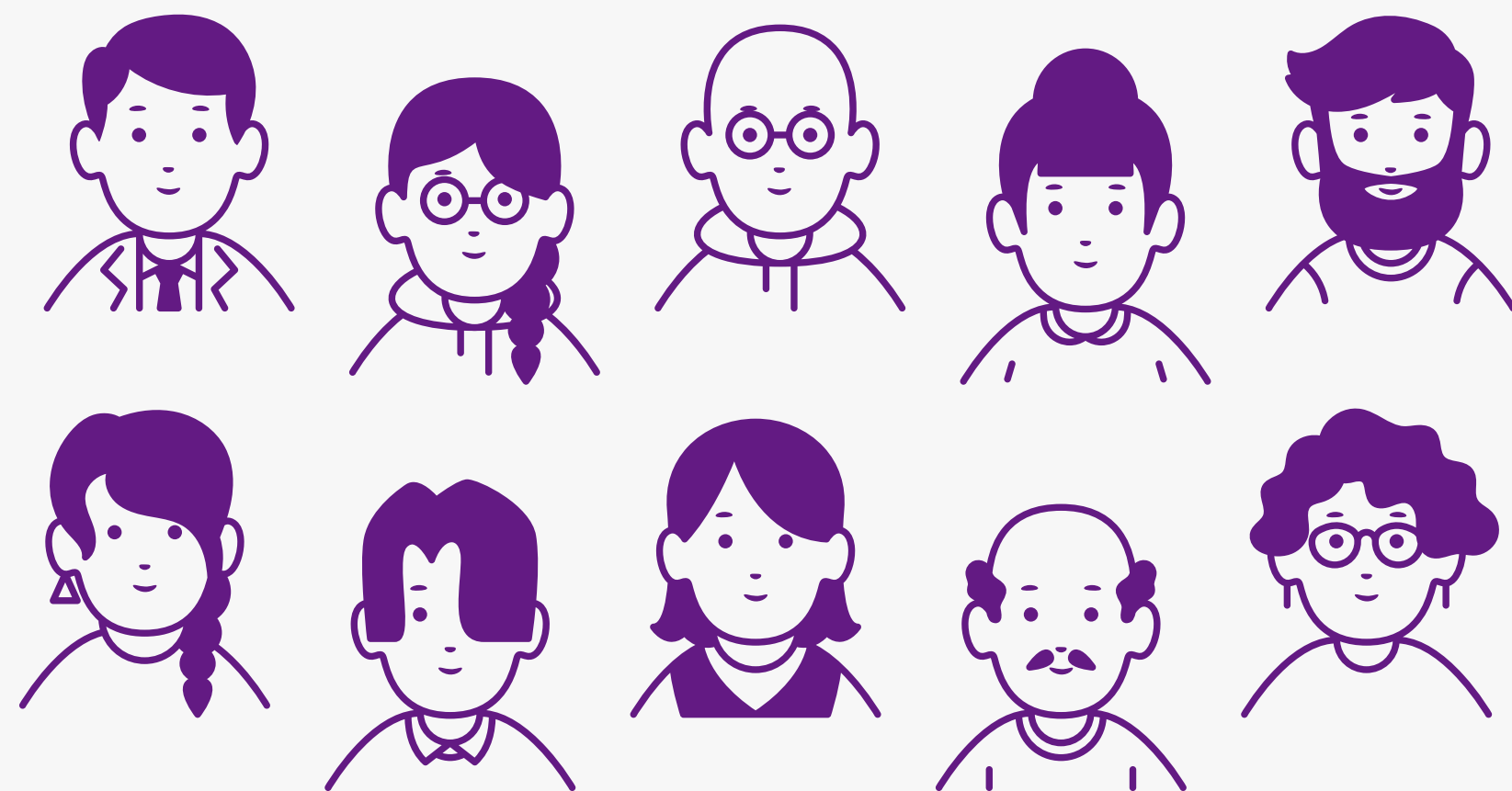
This playbook outlines a list of possible inclusive activities which have been tested in small group (5-10 people) setting:

BINGO

Outing

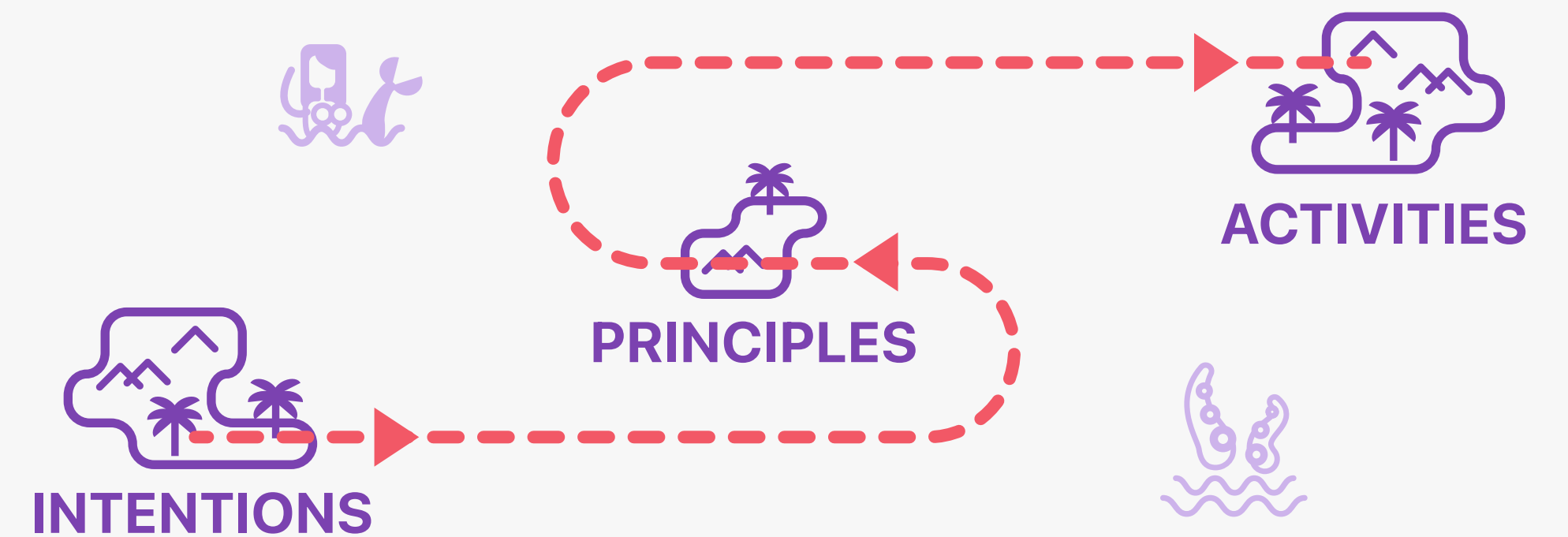
Awareness Guide

Reflections



These activities aim to facilitate the experience of different stages of inclusion for participants and organisers.

If you are someone looking to run these activities, **we encourage you to start by understanding the intentions and principles behind how these activities were run, before executing them.** ING activities must be informed by the context of the group, and these listed activities should be adapted for appropriate use.



The list of activities here are also non-exhaustive, and we invite you to share other activities you have tried that achieve the intention of 'unremarkable' inclusion with us.

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Activity 01

B.I.N.G.O

Why was this designed?

The bingo sheet was designed as an ice-breaker activity to get to know each other, with the intention of bringing out the similarities between different social groups. As part of the activity, participants have to find other individuals who share a certain trait or life experience similar to them, serving as an effective good conversation starter with those they have not met before.

How was this designed?

Bingo questions were designed with the intended audience in mind which we knew would include a mix of autistics and non-autistics. We actively sought the input of an autistic when designing the questions on the bingo sheet. We were conscientious in clarifying if our experiences were similar to him and his community, and roped him in to suggest a set of questions as well.

Questions that provide insights into a person's life, like 'do you enjoy your work', can be included as this provides participants with conversational starters and follow up questions such as "what do you do for a living?"

What stages of inclusion does this facilitate?

The questions asked in bingo facilitate awareness as participants get to know one another, and develop an understanding of each other's needs. In the process, they become mindful in how they relate to one another (awareness, mindfulness).

What we learnt?

In the process of planning this bingo activity, we learnt the importance of co-creation with the participants. This ensured that the content of the bingo card was relatable to the participants by testing and validating our assumptions. Initially, the organisers thought to avoid topics such as 'school/work' due to very different schooling experiences in special education schools for the autistics.

However, when we clarified with the autistics, we were encouraged to include them as school played a significant part of their lives, and it would serve as a good conversation topic.

Bingo Challenge

Find someone that:

has the same favorite color as you

is born in the same month

stays in the same area as you

has a pet

loves his / her work

has the same number of siblings

loves the same sports as you

has the same favorite subject as you

had a celebrity crush

Rules:

- Form 3 in a row to complete! (any direction)
- Same person can only sign a max. 2 times

Awareness Guide

Why was this designed?

An awareness guide was designed in response to the needs highlighted by the autistics. They informed us that many autistics were not taught social cues and appropriate ways of approaching and interacting with others.

As such, we developed a one-pager guide on meeting new communities. This guide aims to ease all participants into a new social setting and remind them to withhold judgement to create a safe space. It establishes that each individual is different and provides concrete steps on how to manage the feelings of discomfort when confronted with these differences.

How was this designed?

The awareness guide was designed by, and for, both PWD and non-PWDs to ensure there is no 'othering' of any group. We consulted with autistics, asking them questions to establish their needs:

1. What were some useful handles they wished they knew before they met a non-autistic?
2. What did they hope non-autistics would know prior to meeting them?
3. How do they feel when meeting non-autistics?

This guide was created generically and meant for NGOs to use and adapt to their respective communities and people groups.

What stages of inclusion does this facilitate?

The awareness guide helps to create awareness and an understanding that differences between people exist. It encourages mindfulness, priming individuals to be intentional in their actions, and encouraging them to seek clarifications rather than judge others based on personal assumptions made (awareness, mindfulness).

What we learnt?

Initially, the organisers had not planned for an awareness guide until we learnt from the autistics that they were not taught 'appropriate' social interaction skills in school. We thus felt a need to provide practical handles for them and remind all participants to be mindful in considering everyone's needs to create an inclusive environment.

Guide to Joining New Communities

1. Appreciating Differences



From differences that are visible upon first impression:
e.g. Race, Physical Disability, Social Skills



To those that are not as obvious:
e.g. Personality, Experiences, Preferences

These differences shape how we **think, speak, and act**, and contribute to our unique set of **strengths and weaknesses**.

A characteristic used in the appropriate setting becomes a strength and when it's not, it can be seen as a weakness.

"Everybody is unique and we want to celebrate that."

2. Managing Differences

With differences, it's normal to occasionally be confronted with feelings of discomfort.

1. Catch yourself when judgmental thoughts start to fester.

- Write them down on your phone.
- If you need a moment to regulate your emotions, it is fine to excuse yourself temporarily.

2. Be curious

- Instead of assuming, ask "why" and clarify.

3. It's ok to feel bad if an unfortunate incident occurred.

- You can extend forgiveness and apologise if necessary.

Activity 03

Outing

Why was this designed?

An outing creates the opportunity for social interaction between different communities.

How was this designed?

This outing was planned together with an autistic, to ensure that the outing would cater to various needs. Through the awareness guide, participants were also mentally prepared to meet new people.

What stages of inclusion does this facilitate?

It provides people with a platform to be aware of their conscious biases, be mindful in their actions, and take a step to enact inclusive practices (awareness, mindfulness, inclusive practices).

What we learnt?

The choice of activity to take a walk at a park created a space for organic mingling, as opposed to an activity in a confined space / area. People could easily split into smaller groups to have conversations. The smaller-sized groups (between 2-3 pax) enabled more personal interactions and made the experience less overwhelming for all participants.

Communicating the objective of meeting new people prior to the outing was also crucial in reducing social anxiety amongst the participants.

A trip to National Orchid Garden

with dinner was organised between
PWDs and Non-PWDs.



Outing with faces blurred for privacy

Reflection

Why was this designed?

We believe that reflection is crucial as it acts as a way for the participants to consolidate and process their experiences from the outing, encouraging them to bring back what they have learnt about inclusivity into their daily lives and communities.

We also wanted to provide a platform to surface any issues or concerns, and address them so as to avoid any misunderstandings or mischaracterizations of PWDs.

How was this designed?

It was designed to be interactive, making use of online tools (e.g. Google Keep).

The whole process was designed to be conversational, with the facilitator probing deeper into the participants' responses for deeper reflections and call to action. (See attached sample)

What stages of inclusion does this facilitate?

It consolidates all the activities, pushing the participants to take action in enacting inclusive practices (awareness, mindfulness, inclusive practices).

What we learnt?

Reflective practices are important for fostering inclusion as we listen to different perspectives and question our own biases. It also helps us understand the challenges faced by marginalised communities.

Reflecting encourages collaboration and decision-making together with marginalised communities, allowing us to take action in helpful ways. We can then create inclusive communities that embrace diversity and treat everyone with fairness and respect.



Reflection: Reflective Model (Facilitator guide)

1. Consolidate

Invite participants to:

a. Reflect & journal their recent experiences.

- How did you feel?
Take notice: of any joys, discomfort, surprise, etc.
- What stood out to you?

Highlight incidents those that stood out to you

b. Was there anything insightful that they learnt?

c. Do they feel like the interactions were mutual, and why?

2. Converse

a. Point out key reflection notes that participants mentioned that are insightful and require a little more unpacking.

b. There might be some notes that carry the following themes.

- **Mutuality in the connection:** Were the interactions mutual? If it was one-sided, how was the experience of that? Did the participants share similar interests?
- **Moments with themes of safety:** What did the participants disclose that suggested that there was safety in the session?
- **Moments that were surprising:** What was insightful, or shocking? (Such moments could also be worth celebrating)
- **Moments that were concerning, uncomfortable, or induced worries:** Do elaborate and share the concerns/worries to help us understand.

3. Consider

What should inclusiveness lead to?

This is an existential question that does not require an answer. It is really for participants to reflect over the concept of inclusiveness.

4. Commit

A decision model for action challenges participants to consider how they can apply inclusiveness into their daily lives. It will be good to brainstorm and organise it into these 3 levels and shareback in the group discussion:

- **Personal Level** - Family, friends and how inclusivity can be fostered
- **Community Level** - Neighbourhood, Community/Interests groups
- **Societal Level** - Public spaces i.e. MRT, Shopping malls, parks etc.



Reflection: Sample Reflective Framework

Consolidate

Spend some time to reflect & journal your recent experiences

Learnings / Insights

One moment	Moment of joy: Marcus initiating a conversation.	Moment of discomfort: When Patrick consistently speak loudly and sounded like he was raising his voice.	Moment of joy: When different ones approached me to say hi excitedly and strike a convowith me, and when I related well with some of them. (Similar experiences/interests)	Moment of joy: Having time off to walk around somewhere with a view.	Moment of discomfort: Talking about the social service sector with Marcus.	Moment of discomfort: Handshakes.	Moment of surprise: That they were all working and graduated from university.	That they can progress and perform in the education system.	Learning point: Autistic people can excel and perform in academic settings (After seeing Guan Yi's academic transcripts).
	Moment of joy: Finding commonalities with Guan Yi, sharing common interests with him.	Moment of discomfort: When we encountered a couple having a wedding shoot and Iijie became jittery and was muttering about how he was scared that he would 'f*** it up'	Moment of discomfort: When Patrick was sharing about his passions (Cats, IT, etc) for a prolonged period of time and I struggled on catch on or stay present in the convo.	Moment of dissonance: Hearing about sector salary guidelines.	Moment of joy: Talking to Li Jie about his art stuff and microbio work an P&G.	Moment of joy: Finding common interests with Iijie and Daniel, and learning about their experiences in those areas (Art for Iijie and language / music for Daniel).	That they are employed by good companies!	That they didn't really have the same social cues as the rest of society.	

Converse

Safety

Dignity

Commit

Personal Life

Community

Society

Knowing everyone beforehand.	Hidden similarities - religious / values.	Gender ratio.	The dinner setting was more restricted, while having open spaces for activities were more engaging.	By creating safe spaces for them to be themselves. Accepting.	Overlooking differences	Treating people as equal.	Provoked more thought on what inclusion looks like.	How I respond to people I see in public. How to be friends.	Sharing with my friends about my experiences with autistics.	How to bring the idea of inclusion more into my area.
Hand an agent to bridge the gap.	The option to rotate.	Open spaces - more free to roam.		The right to participate in anything.	Making the decision beyond just being aware, but being inclusive. Seeing things as ok.		Change how I treat my friend who is a bit different from us.	Talking about inclusion in the church and what it looks like.	More empathy rather than understanding of issues.	

INCLUSIVE NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUP PLAYBOOK

Brought to you by:



We are grateful for our partnership with SPD and the Autistic community whom have generously allowed us to co-create alongside them to develop the first iteration of the ING Playbook.

Have additional inputs or require any clarifications?

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