

Behind Happy Faces – Collegiate Member Program

Virtual Facilitation Tips

Overview

The [Behind Happy Faces curriculum](#) is designed to give students the tools they need to support their mental health. The program defines mental health and breaks down the stigmas surrounding it; opens doors for more vocabulary to discuss mental health with others; teaches about effective coping; helps you help your friends who are experiencing mental health challenges; what to do if someone is suicidal; sympathy, empathy, and compassion; the neuroscience of happiness; procrastination; and the difference between acute stress and chronic stress.

General Tips and Tricks

Lesson Videos

Each lesson includes a video that introduces the content of the lesson and information on the topic. Chapters can send the video to members in advance of the lesson or play at the beginning of the lesson. If you do play the video at the beginning of the lesson, make sure to test your speakers and download the video in advance.

Lesson Exercises

Every lesson includes exercises to help members understand and apply the information covered in the lesson. The following pages of this resource provides guidance on how to adjust each lesson's exercises for virtual facilitation.

[Lesson One – Understanding Mental Health](#)

[Lesson Two – Your Mental Health](#)

[Lesson Three – Changing Ineffective Coping](#)

[Lesson Four – Talk to a Brother](#)

[Lesson Five – Before the Breakdown](#)

[Lesson Six – Acute Stress vs. Chronic Stress](#)

[Lesson Seven – Good Stress and Stopping Procrastination](#)

[Lesson Eight – Sympathy, Empathy, and Compassion](#)

[Lesson Nine – Neuroscience of Happiness](#)



Lesson One – Understanding Mental Health

Exercise 1

In this exercise, members will discuss the prompt: What words, ideas, people, movies, songs, books, celebrities, and scenarios do you think of when you hear the words “mental health”?

To facilitate this exercise virtually:

- Chat Feature
 - o Utilize the chat feature in your platform (e.g. Zoom, RingCentral, Google Meet, etc.) as an opportunity for members to share their responses.
 - o Split members into breakout rooms for 2 minutes in the platform and instruct them to discuss their responses.
 - o Bring members back to the large group and debrief.
- Word Cloud
 - o Create a word cloud with members’ responses using a free online tool (e.g. Wordle, Mentimeter, etc.)

Exercise 2

In this exercise, members will learn more about the mental health challenges we are all trying to address. **Before starting, remind members that they are not required to share their experiences and if they do that they are in a confidential space.**

To facilitate this exercise in a virtual manner:

- Chat Feature
 - o Utilize the chat feature in your platform (e.g. Zoom, RingCentral, Google Meet, etc.) as a space for members to share their responses. To maintain confidentiality, ask members to share their responses **privately** with the facilitator and indicating permission to read the responses anonymously through the chat feature.
 - You can also consider using Slido, Ahaslides or PollEverywhere to allow members to write in anonymous experiences. This does not allow you the control of knowing who is writing what, but it does allow members to share their stories.
 - o Once the facilitator receives the private responses, they can read each of the responses to the group.
 - o Depending on the size of the group, the facilitator may want to utilize breakout rooms to provide a smaller space for members to debrief this exercise.



Lesson Two – Your Mental Health

Exercise 1

In this exercise, members will classify mental health into five categories. Oftentimes someone can be dealing with stress, a breakup, and/or depression. These challenges are in different categories and it is helpful to know how to separate them.

To facilitate this exercise in a virtual manner:

- Breakout Rooms
 - o Share the 24 mental health challenges screen from the PPT instead of using the handout.
 - o Instead of using flip chart paper, ask members to write down the five categories (Everyday Challenges, Environmental Factor, Significant Events, Mental Health Disorders, Developmental Disabilities) on a sheet of paper.
 - o Members can then write down the category for each of the 24 terms.
- Online Poll
 - o Prior to the lesson, the facilitator can use a free online polling tool (e.g. Mentimeter, Poll Everywhere, etc.) to create a poll. Members could use their phones to access the poll and match notecards with each category using the polling tool.
- Chat Feature
 - o The facilitator could read the challenges, one at a time, and ask members to identify the category using the chat feature. For example, the facilitator could say “which category does ADHD belong in?” and members could type their response in the chat feature.

Exercise 2

In this exercise, members will be introduced to the mental health spectrum and identify where members are on that spectrum. During this exercise, members will be prompted to share where they are on the mental health spectrum. **Again, be sure to remind the members that they are not required to share their experiences and if they do that they are in a confidential space.**

To facilitate this exercise in a virtual manner:

- Online Poll
 - o Prior to the lesson, the facilitator can use a free online polling tool (e.g. Mentimeter, Poll Everywhere, etc.) to create a space where members can anonymously share their responses of where they feel they are on the mental health spectrum.
- Chat Feature
 - o Utilize the chat feature in your platform (e.g. Zoom, RingCentral, Google Meet, etc.) as a space for members to share their responses. To maintain

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confidentiality, ask members to share their responses **privately** with the facilitator and indicating permission to read the responses anonymously through the chat feature.

- Once the facilitator receives the private responses, they can read each of the responses to the group.
 - Depending on the size of the group, the facilitator may want to utilize breakout rooms to provide a smaller space for members to debrief this exercise.
- Breakout Rooms
- Depending on the size of the group, the facilitator may want to split members into breakout rooms in the platform to debrief this exercise.



Lesson Three – Changing Ineffective Coping

Exercise 1

During this exercise, members will discuss causes of stress and how they cope with stress. While working in pairs, members will have five minutes to write down three causes of stress, three feelings from those causes, and three ways you cope with those causes/feelings.

To facilitate this exercise in a virtual manner:

- Breakout Rooms
 - o Split the group into pairs. Each pair will join their private breakout room and discuss three causes of stress, three feelings from those causes, and three ways they cope with those causes/feelings.
 - o Return to whole group and allow several groups to share how the causes of stress make them feel and how they cope with those causes and feelings.
- Chat Feature
 - o Utilize the chat feature in your platform (e.g. Zoom, RingCentral, Google Meet, etc.) as a space for members to share personal examples or general causes of stress that a college student can experience.

Exercise 2

During this exercise, members will differentiate between effective and ineffective coping. Members will identify their own coping mechanisms as a guide to see which coping mechanisms they may want to change.

To facilitate this exercise in a virtual manner:

- Breakout Rooms
 - o Split the group back into pairs. Each pair will join their private breakout room and discuss the coping mechanisms and which category they fall under: effective or ineffective coping.
 - o Return to whole group and allow several groups to share how an ineffective coping mechanism could be more effective.
- Chat Feature
 - o Allow members to individually reflect on their coping mechanisms and discern which category they fall under: effective or ineffective coping.
 - o Utilize the chat feature in your platform (e.g. Zoom, RingCentral, Google Meet, etc.) as a space for members to share how an ineffective coping mechanism could be more effective.

Exercise 3

During this exercise, members will learn about self-compassion and how they treat themselves. Self-compassion is the voice we use inside our heads. We talk to ourselves more

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than we talk to any other person. The voice we hear in our own minds is louder than the voices of other people and has a major impact on our lives.

To facilitate this exercise in a virtual manner:

- Online Poll
 - o Prior to the lesson, the facilitator can use a free online polling tool (e.g. Mentimeter, Poll Everywhere, etc.) to create a space where members can anonymously share their responses to the following prompt: Why do we often treat ourselves more harshly than we treat our friends? (Ex. Not worried about hurting my own feelings, self-hatred, fear, etc.)
- Chat Feature
 - o Members will do the following activity on their own. At the top of a piece of paper they should write down a difficult event they have experienced in their life that involved loss, change, or rejection (e.g. a breakup, a death, loss of a friend, bullying, isolation etc.). On the right side of the page they will write down three things they said to themselves during that experience. On the left side they will write down three things they would say to a friend who went through the same experience.
 - o Utilize the chat feature in your platform (e.g. Zoom, RingCentral, Google Meet, etc.) as a space for members to share their responses to the following prompt: Share your experience, what you said to yourself, and what you would say to a friend in the same situation.
 - o Summarize why it is important to treat ourselves the same way we treat our friends.



Lesson Four – Talk to a Brother

Exercise 1

During this exercise, members will lay the foundation for an authentic and supportive chapter experience and make it easier for members to talk about mental health and get the help they need.

To facilitate this exercise in a virtual manner:

- Chat Feature
 - o Utilize the chat feature in your platform (e.g. Zoom, RingCentral, Google Meet, etc.) as an open forum for members to respond to the following prompt: Write about a hypothetical situation where you might need to intervene with a friend. What are the warning signs? What makes you think you need to intervene? What would you do to intervene?
 - o Ask the group to read through the responses and ask them to identify words or themes that stuck with them while reading through everyone's responses.
- Breakout Rooms
 - o Split the group into smaller groups to respond to the following prompt: Write about a hypothetical situation where you might need to intervene with a friend. What are the warning signs? What makes you think you need to intervene? What would you do to intervene?
 - o The members will share their responses in their small groups and identify words or themes that stuck with them while reading through everyone's responses.
 - o Once the members are brought back to the whole group each group can share their common themes and words.

Exercise 2

During this exercise, members will better understand how to approach a person experiencing a mental health challenge. This could mean reaching out to a friend who has anxiety or depression, went through a breakup, got rejected, is abusing alcohol/drugs, or another similar situation.

To facilitate this exercise in a virtual manner:

- Breakout Rooms
 - o Assign members to various breakout rooms and provide them with the Talk to a Brother/Sister handout and the following scenario: You notice a change in your friend's behavior that causes you concern. They are not eating regularly. They are constantly stressed. You feel like they are hiding their emotions.
 - o Allow five minutes for each small group to discuss the questions on the Talk to a Brother/Sister handout. After the five minutes is over, one representative from each group will report to the large group.

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This exercise is not intended for someone who you think is suicidal. In this event, please notify an appropriate professional.



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Lesson Five – Before the Breakdown

Exercise 1

During this exercise, members will learn about what to do when someone is having suicidal thoughts. The exercise will lay the foundation for an authentic and supportive chapter experience. Remind the members that this is a serious topic and it can be very sensitive. If anyone needs to take a break or excuse themselves be sure to support them in that decision.

To facilitate this exercise in a virtual manner:

- Breakout Rooms
 - o Split the group into smaller groups to compile a list of the warning signs that they know of for someone who is contemplating suicide. Once a few minutes have passed, bring the members back to the whole group to make a list of the warning signs altogether.
- Chat Feature
 - o Utilize the chat feature in your platform (e.g. Zoom, RingCentral, Google Meet, etc.) as a space for members to compile a list of the warning signs that they know of for someone who is contemplating suicide. Allow a few minutes for an open forum style submission of warning signs before “closing” the submissions to save the list for future use.

Exercise 2

During this exercise, members will learn about frequently asked questions about suicide and better understanding what to do when navigating difficult conversations.

To facilitate this exercise in a virtual manner:

- Share Screen
 - o Utilize the share screen feature in your platform (e.g. Zoom, RingCentral, Google Meet, etc.) to promote access to the PowerPoint slides associated with this exercise. Every member will be able to view the questions and answers. Encourage the members to use the chat feature and/or raise hand function to ask questions and engage in a dialogue.



Lesson Six – Acute Stress vs. Chronic Stress

Exercise 1

During this exercise, members will discuss the difference between acute and chronic stress and identify ways to have more power in various situations.

To facilitate this exercise in a virtual manner:

- Breakout Rooms
 - o Split the group into smaller groups to look at the five situations and come up with ways to have more power in the situations. Once a few minutes have passed, bring the members back to the whole group to discuss what groups came up with altogether.
- Chat Feature
 - o Utilize the chat feature in your platform (e.g. Zoom, RingCentral, Google Meet, etc.) as a space for members to provide ideas for each situation. Allow a few minutes for an open forum style submission of ideas for each situation before “closing” the submissions.

Exercise 2

During this exercise, members will learn about skills to reframe stress.

To facilitate this exercise in a virtual manner:

- Breakout Rooms
 - o Split the group into smaller groups to look at the five situations again and come up with ways to reframe or change the response to the cause of stress. Once a few minutes have passed, bring the members back to the whole group to discuss what groups came up with altogether.
- Chat Feature
 - o Utilize the chat feature in your platform (e.g. Zoom, RingCentral, Google Meet, etc.) as a space for members to provide ideas for each situation. Allow a few minutes for an open forum style submission of ideas for each situation before “closing” the submissions.

Exercise 3

During this exercise, members will learn about how to slow down irrational thoughts.

To facilitate this exercise in a virtual manner:

- Pen and Paper
 - o Instruct the members to gather a piece of paper and writing utensil. Write down a cause of stress that gives you irrational fears. Then write three ways that you can slow down those irrational fears.

Lesson Seven – Good Stress and Stopping Procrastination

Exercise 1

During this exercise, members will identify what skills a person can use to utilize acute/good stress in their daily life.

To facilitate this exercise in a virtual manner:

- Breakout Rooms
 - o Split the group into smaller groups to look at the two scenarios and discuss ways that the subjects can take what they are doing to prepare with acute stress and use it for things that cause chronic stress. Once a few minutes have passed, bring the members back to the whole group to discuss what groups came up with altogether.
- Chat Feature
 - o Allow members to individually reflect on ways that the subjects can take what they are doing to prepare with acute stress and use it for things that cause chronic stress.
 - o Utilize the chat feature in your platform (e.g. Zoom, RingCentral, Google Meet, etc.) as a space for members to share their ideas and thoughts.

Exercise 2

During this exercise, members will understand the role of emotional regulation in procrastination.

To facilitate this exercise in a virtual manner:

- Share Screen
 - o Utilize the share screen feature in your platform (e.g. Zoom, RingCentral, Google Meet, etc.) to promote access to the PowerPoint slides associated with this exercise. Every member will be able to view the questions and answers. Encourage the members to use the chat feature and/or raise hand function to ask questions and engage in a dialogue.
 - o Then, allow members to write down one thing that they typically procrastinate on and two strategies they can use to change procrastination. Ask for a couple of volunteers to share their answers.

Lesson Eight – Sympathy, Empathy, and Compassion

Exercise 1

During this exercise, members will interact with another person's story to better experience what it is like to live from someone else's perspective.

To facilitate this exercise in a virtual manner:

- Large Group
 - o You could facilitate this activity with the large group if you would like.

Exercise 2

During this exercise, members will identify the differences between sympathy, empathy, and compassion.

To facilitate this exercise in a virtual manner:

- Share Screen
 - o Utilize the share screen feature in your platform (e.g. Zoom, RingCentral, Google Meet, etc.) to promote access to the PowerPoint slides associated with this exercise. Every member will be able to view the scenarios, questions, and answers. Encourage the members to use the chat feature and/or raise hand function to ask questions and engage in a dialogue.



Lesson Nine – Neuroscience of Happiness

Exercise 1

In this exercise, members will practice labeling negative emotions.

To facilitate this exercise in a virtual manner:

- Pen and Paper
 - o Instruct the members to gather a piece of paper and writing utensil. Have them create three separate headings of Positive, Negative, and Neutral. They will then write down all the emotions they have felt today or this week separating them into the appropriate category.

Exercise 2

In this exercise, members will practice bring grateful.

To facilitate this exercise in a virtual manner:

- Pen and Paper
 - o Instruct the members to gather a piece of paper and writing utensil. Have them write down one thing that they dislike in their life. Then have them write down three things they are grateful for.
- Chat Feature
 - o Utilize the chat feature in your platform (e.g. Zoom, RingCentral, Google Meet, etc.) as a space for members to share their responses.

Exercise 3

In this exercise, members will practice deciding to feel better.

To facilitate this exercise in a virtual manner:

- Pen and Paper
 - o Instruct the members to gather a piece of paper and writing utensil. Have them write down a negative feeling they oftentimes experience (e.g. overwhelmed, anxiety, chronic stress, anger). Then have them write down two decisions they could make to change that constant feeling.
- Chat Feature
 - o Utilize the chat feature in your platform (e.g. Zoom, RingCentral, Google Meet, etc.) as a space for members to share their responses.

Exercise 4

In this exercise, members will practice human touch.

To facilitate this exercise in a virtual manner:

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- You can skip this exercise and move on to the Summarize portion of the lesson. If comfortable doing so, you could ask members to break for 3-5 minutes to find a friend or family member within proximity to practice physical touch. If you move forward with this option, members should still ask for consent to hugging or touching others.

