



# Facilitation Tools & Practices

A Resource from the Erasmus+ Training Course "Resilience in Times of Collapse"

## Introduction

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This booklet brings together the facilitation tools, practices, and methodologies that emerged from a transformative 10-day intensive training program focused on building resilience, active hope, and ecological consciousness among youth workers across Europe.

The training, held at Tamera Peace Research & Education Centre in Portugal, brought together 35 youth workers from 14+ countries alongside 7 facilitators, creating a rich learning community of 42 participants united in addressing urgent environmental, social, and economic crises.

Through immersive learning, non-formal education methods, and deep community experience, participants gained competences aligned with the European Training Strategy for youth workers, including:

- Facilitating learning and designing programs
- Communicating meaningfully with cultural sensitivity
- Collaborating in teams and networking
- Advocating, assessing, evaluating, and civic engagement

# About This Booklet

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This resource compiles practical facilitation tools, games, and methodologies used throughout the training. Each tool is described in detail, allowing youth workers, educators, and facilitators across Europe to adapt and use these practices in their own communities.

## The tools are organized to support various facilitation needs:

- **Building trust and authentic communication**
- **Creating safe spaces for deep emotional work**
- **Fostering embodied learning and creativity**
- **Supporting collective action and visioning**
- **Integrating trauma-informed practices**

## How to Use This Booklet:

- **Choose tools relevant to your context** — not all tools suit every group or situation
- **Adapt flexibly** — the practices described here are suggestions; adapt them to your community's needs and culture
- **Build from experience** — start with simpler practices and move toward deeper work as trust develops
- **Prioritize safety** — always consider the emotional readiness and consent of your group
- **Share and evolve** — these tools belong to the learning community; please share your adaptations and learnings with others

# Project Overview

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## Vision & Context

**"Active Hope in a World of Collapse: Embracing Challenges and Opportunities"** emerged in response to urgent planetary and social crises. The training asked critical questions:

- How can we be with collapse, uncertainty, and impermanence in ways that increase connection and vitality rather than fear?
- How do we create spaces where denial and overwhelm transform into Active Hope?
- How can we dismantle systems of oppression while building solidarity and collaboration?

## Training Framework

The 10-day intensive program was inspired by:

- **Joanna Macy's "The Work That Reconnects" spiral** — a framework for transforming despair into active hope
- **Tamera's 40+ years of community building, peace research, and ecological regeneration** — lived models of sustainable living and nonviolent community
- **Non-formal education methodologies** — experiential learning, peer support, and embodied practices
- **Trauma-informed and decolonial approaches** — addressing systems of oppression and creating brave spaces for difficult conversations

## Key Learning Areas

Area	Focus
<b>Facilitation &amp; Communication</b>	Heart-centred communication, authentic dialogue, trust-building through council practices, trauma-informed presence
<b>Ecological &amp; Systems Awareness</b>	Understanding interconnection, processing eco-anxiety, envisioning regenerative futures, meaningful action
<b>Justice &amp; Decolonization</b>	Examining systems of power, intercultural sensitivity, centring marginalized voices, genuine inclusion
<b>Personal Resilience &amp; Embodiment</b>	Inner practices, trauma processing, nervous system resilience, joy and celebration, sustaining engagement

# Facilitation Tools



## Tool 1: Council Practice

Ways of Council / Circle Practice

### PURPOSE

Foster authentic, heart-centred communication; build relational consciousness and trust

### GROUP SIZE

4–30 people (10–30 works best)

### DURATION

30–90 minutes

## How It Works

1. Arrange participants in a circle
2. Introduce purpose, values & guidelines (speaking from heart, listening, no cross-talk, confidentiality)
3. Use a talking piece; only the holder speaks
4. Everyone gets a chance to share (often in response to a prompt)
5. Optional rounds: reflection, gratitude, witnessing
6. Close with final thoughts and acknowledgments

### Facilitator Tips

- Hold space gently but firmly; ensure respect for guidelines
- Monitor time to allow space for all

- Be attentive to group dynamics; ensure quieter voices are heard
- Use meaningful prompts that invite personal sharing



## Tool 2: Forum

Tamera Forum / Social Transparency Forum

### PURPOSE

Provide safe space for expressing feelings, conflicts, and hidden issues; promote relational honesty

### GROUP SIZE

10–50 people (established group with trust)

### DURATION

60–120 minutes

## How It Works

1. Set clear norms: confidentiality, respect, openness
2. One person enters centre of circle (the "performer")
3. Performer shares something difficult or deeply meaningful
4. Others witness and give feedback ("mirrors")
5. Facilitator holds space and ensures safety

### Facilitator Tips

- Facilitator must be deeply trusted by the group
- Take care with emotional safety; group must be ready for vulnerability

- Balance intensity with creative relief (art, music, song)
- Be clear about confidentiality



## Tool 3: Small Family Groups

Intimate Sharing Circles

### PURPOSE

Create trusted small circles within larger courses; ensure everyone is seen and supported

### GROUP SIZE

4–5 participants per group

### DURATION

10–60 minutes per meeting (regular sessions recommended)

## How It Works

1. Divide into stable groups of 4–5 throughout course
2. Agree on basic principles: confidentiality, active listening, no advice unless requested
3. Use a prompt (e.g., "How am I arriving today?")
4. Each person shares; others listen with full attention
5. Close with reflection, gratitude, or silence



## Tool 4: Warm-Up Games / Energizers

Bringing Energy and Playfulness

### PURPOSE

Bring energy and playfulness; help participants reconnect with bodies and each other

### GROUP SIZE

6–30 participants

### DURATION

5–15 minutes

## Examples

- Name games and mirroring exercises
- Movement circles and rhythm clapping
- Short dances and playful gestures



## Tool 5: Theatre Exercises for Embodied Learning

Exploration Through Play and Creativity

### PURPOSE

Explore themes through play, creativity, and body awareness; strengthen group connection

### GROUP SIZE

10–40 participants

 **DURATION**

20–60 minutes

### Inspired By

Physical Theatre and Theatre of the Oppressed (Augusto Boal) applied to community settings. Emphasizes play and curiosity over performance.



## Tool 6: Deep Listening Circle

Voices from the Frontlines

 **PURPOSE**

Create sacred space for sharing lived realities; foster empathy and solidarity

 **GROUP SIZE**

10–40 participants

 **DURATION**

60–90 minutes

### How It Works

1. Prepare space with clarity of intention — this is a listening ritual, not debate
2. Invite 1–3 speakers to share about lived realities of struggle or resistance
3. Listeners stay in silence and open-hearted attention
4. After sharing, offer moment of silence or collective breath

5. Optional brief reflections — gratitude and solidarity, not analysis

6. Close with grounding ritual or song



## Tool 7: Project Presentations

Sharing Our Work (Political Café)

### PURPOSE

Offer space for participants to share their projects; foster inspiration and networking

### GROUP SIZE

10–40 participants (2–3 presenters per session)

### DURATION

30–60 minutes per session (10–20 min per presenter)



## Tool 8: Open Space Sessions

Self-Organized Learning & Emergence

### PURPOSE

Empower participants to choose their learning path; encourage self-organization and creativity

### GROUP SIZE

20–100+ participants

 **DURATION**

1–3 hours (or half/full day)

## Core Principle

*"Whoever comes are the right people; whatever happens is the right thing"* (Open Space Technology, Harrison Owen)



## Tool 9: The Work That Reconnects Practices

From Despair to Active Hope

 **PURPOSE**

Deepen connection with self, others, and living world; transform despair into active hope

 **GROUP SIZE**

8–50 participants

 **DURATION**

30 minutes to half day

## The Spiral Framework

1. **Gratitude** — Reconnect with what we love
2. **Honouring Our Pain** — Feel our interconnection with Earth's suffering
3. **Seeing with New Eyes** — Awaken creative possibilities

#### 4. **Going Forth** — Take action with resilience and purpose

**Developed by:** Joanna Macy and colleagues | **Learn more:**  
[workthatreconnects.org](http://workthatreconnects.org)



### **Tool 10: Trauma-Informed Presence Practices**

Nervous System Regulation & Safety

#### **PURPOSE**

Support grounding and presence; regulate nervous system before and after deep work

#### **GROUP SIZE**

Any size (up to 30 for guided exercises)

#### **DURATION**

5–15 minutes; can be woven throughout sessions

### **Core Practices**

- Grounding and centring exercises
- Conscious breathing (4-count in, 6-count out)
- Gentle body movement and awareness
- Invitational language ("if you wish")
- Consistent integration for safety building

**Informed By:** Somatic Experiencing (Peter Levine), Polyvagal Theory (Stephen Porges), Trauma-Sensitive Mindfulness

# Using These Tools in Your Context

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## Adaptation Principles

### 1. Know Your Group

Assess their emotional readiness, cultural background, and experience. Start with simpler tools before moving to deeper practices.

### 2. Build Progressively

Begin with trust-building and energizing tools. Move toward deeper emotional work only when safety is established.

### 3. Honor Context & Culture

These tools emerge from specific traditions (Indigenous circles, Tamera, Theatre of the Oppressed). Adapt them respectfully to your context.

### 4. Prioritize Safety

Explain purpose, give people choice, have exit pathways for those overwhelmed. Know your limits as facilitator.

### 5. Practice on Yourself

Experience tools personally before facilitating. Maintain your own practices (meditation, journaling, movement) to stay grounded.

# Consortium Partners & Credits

## Project Information

Detail	Information
Project Title	Active Hope in a World of Collapse: Embracing Challenges and Opportunities
Project Number	2023-3-PT02-KA153-YOU-000181651
Training Dates	May 3–12, 2025
Location	Tamera Peace Research & Education Centre, Relíquias, Portugal
Participants	42 (35 youth workers + 7 facilitators from 14+ countries)

## European Partners

- PT **G.R.A.C.E. (Tamera)** — Portugal (Applicant)
- AT **Leben in Gemeinschaft** — Austria
- DE **ZEGG Bildungszentrum gGmbH** — Germany
- SE **Ängsbacka Kursgård** — Sweden
- PL **OSADA.EARTH** — Poland
- FR **Argoumbat Ecovillage** — France
- CZ **Vila Flora z.s.** — Czech Republic
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- ES **Be.Time SCA** — Spain

## Global South Partners

- PS **Farkha Ecovillage** — Palestine
- BR **Favela da Paz** — Brazil

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- **Facilitation Team & Community:** All partner organizations and facilitators

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**Key Action:** KA1 — Learning Mobility of Individuals

**Action Type:** Mobility of Youth Workers

**Project Number:** 2023-3-PT02-KA153-YOU-000181651

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## Final Words

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These tools represent a collective wisdom built through decades of facilitation practice, community experimentation, and shared learning. They are offered to you as seeds — invitations to adapt, experiment, and discover what emerges in your own context.

As you work with these practices, remember that the deepest learning happens in relationship — in circles where trust is built, in moments where authentic communication breaks through shame and silence, in collective spaces where we remember our connection to each other and to the living world.

**We hope these tools support your work in building more resilient, just, and regenerative communities. We invite you to join the growing global network of facilitators, educators, and activists working toward the Great Turning — the shift from an industrial growth society to a life-sustaining civilization.**

**With solidarity and hope,**

The Facilitation Team

*"Another world is not only possible; it is already being lived by millions of people." — Arundhati Roy*



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