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[TEMPLATE] ICE BREAKER SUGGESTIONS

Name:	“Getting to Know You”
Duration:	10 mins + 1 additional minute per participant
Online version:	<p>Participants are put into breakout rooms in pairs. They are asked to interview each other using the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What is your name? 2) What’s your pronoun (he/she/they etc.) 3) Why did you decide to volunteer? 4) What was the last thing you did before you went to bed last night (or the last thing you’re willing to share – you don’t need to disclose very private information!) <p>After 5 mins the group reconvenes, and each trainee introduces their partner to the group using their answers to the questions posed. Facilitator should then spend a couple of minutes discussing the following: The importance of Icebreaking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting to know one another • Identifying talking points/common interests • Breaking the “embarrassment barrier” <p>It might also be good to reiterate why it’s important to check pronouns, and not to assume them.</p>
Face-to-face version:	This can run the same way in a room, with participants asked to remain a safe social distance from each other when they go off in pairs.

Name:	Grab and Share / Show and Tell
Duration:	10-20 mins
Online version:	<p>When on a video call, have everyone grab something that is within arm’s reach.</p> <p>Take turns telling a story about that item: Where/when did you get it? Is it meaningful?</p> <p>If you’re on multiple calls with similar people and choose this activity, make sure to grab something new to share each time.</p> <p>Bonus variation: you can also have participants tell completely fantastical, made-up stories about the objects, for extra delight and creativity.</p>
Face-to-face version:	N/A

Name:	Fun with Virtual Backgrounds
Duration:	10 -15 mins
Online version:	<p>Have everyone set their Zoom “virtual background” to something fun, funny, or delightful, such as:</p> <p>The place you wish you could be right now</p> <p>Your favourite scent</p> <p>A still from a movie or cartoon you love</p> <p>Your favourite food/dessert</p> <p>A childhood photo of yourself</p> <p>Something that makes you happy</p> <p>Your favourite city</p> <p>Etc... you can even crowdsource ideas from the group</p> <p>Then you can go around and have everyone talk for a few seconds about what they chose and why.</p>
Face-to-face version:	N/A

Name:	Name Tag
Duration:	5 mins
Online version:	<p>Everyone needs to have their names visible on the screen (i.e. make sure that you set your name to your actual name in Zoom).</p> <p>One person calls out someone else’s name.</p> <p>The person whose name was called yells out “hey!” (or something else you decide on). Then, this person calls out somebody else’s name.</p> <p>Keep going until everyone has been “tagged.”</p>
Face-to-face version:	<p>One person calls out someone else’s name.</p> <p>The person whose name was called yells out “hey!” (or something else you decide on). Then, this person calls out somebody else’s name.</p> <p>Keep going until everyone has been “tagged.”</p>

Name:	Sound Ball
Duration:	10 mins
Online version:	<p>The premise is you're throwing around an invisible/imaginary ball.</p> <p>Someone starts by forming their hands as if they're holding an invisible ball, and saying the name of the person they're about to "throw" the invisible ball to.</p> <p>The thrower has to make a specific sound with their mouth when throwing (it can be anything... "whee," "boing," "poof," "blah," "shayayayaya", whatever).</p> <p>The catcher must make the same sound that the thrower made. Then, the catcher names a new person they're about to throw to, and throws it to them with a new made-up sound.</p> <p>Keep going until everyone has had the ball once.</p> <p>Tip: have everyone put their hands up to the camera if they haven't had the ball yet, so that as the game continues, the remaining throwers know who to throw to (if the objective is to include everyone)</p>
Face-to-face version:	As above

Name:	Scene Change
Duration:	10-15 mins
Online version:	<p>Everyone moves out of the frame (but keeps their cameras on). The facilitator instructs everyone to come back to the shot as though they _____ (insert mood / situation / facial expression here). You can do several of these back-to-back. Some fun prompts include:</p> <p>Come back as though you...</p> <p>walked into a room and realized everyone else is throwing you a surprise party.</p> <p>had the world's most ground-breaking idea.</p> <p>just found €20 in your pocket.</p> <p>Etc.</p>
Face-to-face version:	This can be done in person by asking group members to act out the prompts and interact with each other as appropriate

Name:	One Word at a Time Proverb
Duration:	5 - 10 mins
Online version:	<p>Pre-assign the order in which people will speak (typing out everyone's names in order in the chat works well).</p> <p>The first person starts by saying the first word of a (non-existent) proverb.</p> <p>Continue around the group with each person adding one word (e.g.: He... who... slices... radishes... loudly... must... always... etc.);</p> <p>Once the group feels that the natural end of the sentence has been reached, everyone nods and says "yes, yes, yes, yes, yes."</p> <p>You can go around the group several times and come up with several proverbs.</p>
Face-to-face version:	As above

Name:	Eight Nouns
Duration:	10mins
Online version:	Using chat box or white board, ask students to post eight nouns that best describe themselves. Give them a few examples to get started. After five minutes, encourage students to share why their set of nouns are representative of their personalities and backgrounds. This icebreaker helps mentees get to know one another.
Face-to-face version:	As above using post it notes instead of the chat box

Name:	"Our vision for the Future (1)"
Duration:	10 mins
Online version:	Divide participants into breakout rooms of about 3-4 people. Tell them it is five years from now and your organisation has just been announced as the winner of an award. What is the award for? Give groups 5 minutes to discuss this and then bring them back to the main room for feedback.
Face-to-face version:	This can run the same way in a room, with participants asked to remain a safe social distance from each other when they go off in groups.

Name:	“Our vision for the Future (2)”
Duration:	60-90 mins
Online version:	<p>Tell the group you are going to present them with an imaginary scenario to help them think about the kind of future they are working towards. Tell them that a prominent newspaper is preparing a special supplement called “A Fresh Vision For The Future.” The newspaper is inviting many groups and organisations to contribute their vision. Your organisation has been invited to contribute. In the first instance what the newspaper wants is an image, a picture or sketch that captures the vision that your organisation has.</p> <p>Divide trainees into breakout rooms of three and ask each group to come up with an image, picture or sketch of what they see as the vision of the organisation using their whiteboards (they may need a demo of how to open, annotate and share their whiteboard, depending on which software is being used. Alternatively, you could ask them to use a blank PowerPoint slide.)</p> <p>Allow about fifteen minutes for this.</p> <p>Ask each group to screen share their completed whiteboard/slide and invite people to compare and contrast them looking for similar and different elements. Invite people to see if there are elements common to all the images.</p> <p>Then return participants to their breakout rooms. Tell them that the newspaper has also asked that each organisation prepare a short statement, no more than a few sentences, which captures their vision. Invite group members to prepare such a statement based on the images on display (again, using a whiteboard or a blank PowerPoint slide). Allow about fifteen minutes for this.</p> <p>Ask each group to screen share their results, then encourage participants to compare and contrast. An additional useful question you can put is to ask each group to look at the statements of the other groups and to say what words, sentences or elements they like.</p> <p>Finally summarise the elements which seem to have most meaning for the group.</p>
Face-to-face version:	This can run the same way in a room, with participants asked to remain a safe social distance from each other when they go off in groups. Instead of online whiteboards/PowerPoint, supply each group with a flipchart sheet, markers or crayons.

Name:	“Two truths and a lie”
Duration:	10-20 mins
Online version:	Participants are asked to think of three statements. Two must be true statements, and one must be false. Participants take it in turn to share the three statements (in any order) to the group. The group then have 3 minutes to ask them questions and to decide which statement is the lie.
Face-to-face version:	As above.

Name:	“I bet you didn’t know”
Duration:	10-20 mins
Online version:	Participants are given a link to an online poll/interactive whiteboard and asked to anonymously enter a fact about themselves that nobody in the group would know, but that they don’t mind sharing. These statements are projected onto the training screen and participants are told to look at them closely and remember as many as they can. They are then randomly assigned to groups of three in breakout rooms and, by asking questions of other people in the room, to work out which statement belongs to their partners. However, they are not allowed to use any of the words written in the statement when asking the question, and they’re not allowed to ask outright what their fellow trainees wrote.
Face-to-face version:	Participants are given a link to an online poll/interactive whiteboard and asked to enter, using their own devices, two separate facts about themselves that nobody in the group would know, but that they don’t mind sharing. These statements are projected onto the training screen and participants are told, by asking questions of other group members, to work out who each statement belongs to. However, they are not allowed to use any of the words written in the statement when asking the question, and they’re not allowed to ask outright what their fellow trainees wrote. Ensure participants maintain safe social distance throughout.

Name:	Common Ground
Duration:	10 mins
Online version:	In breakout groups (2-4 per group) have 5 minutes to write a list of everything they all have in common. Come back and share this with the wider group
Face-to-face version:	As Above

Name:	Story of your name
Duration:	10mins
Online version:	This activity allows mentees to better understand their peers' unique backgrounds and family histories. Go around the room/zoom and have mentees share their name and its relevance or meaning. This activity allows mentees with similar backgrounds or cultures to identify with one another, and for others to get to know each mentee.
Face-to-face version:	As above

Name:	Hashtag my Week
Duration:	10mins
Online version:	Break group up into 2s/3s in breakout groups Ask each student to share a little about what their week has been like and for their partners to help them find a hashtag for the week. Return from the breakout groups and share the hashtags with the group. Sharing can be done via wordcloud / whiteboard / verbally.
Face-to-face version:	As above

Name:	Zoom Bingo
Duration:	10mins
Online version:	Ask participants a question that can be answered in one word or a short phrase. Each participant writes their response and holds it up to the camera. Anyone whose screen has a row, column, or diagonal with all the same responses wins. Simple questions work best, like... What was the last thing you had to drink? What city are you in now? What type of animal was your first pet?
Face-to-face version:	As above

Name:	Pass the love/ Gift-Giving
Duration:	10mins
Online version:	<p>The goal is to get everyone standing and moving around to re-energize and re-engage.</p> <p>Ask everyone to set their Zoom screen to the “Gallery view” setting which allows you to see everyone as a set of tiled video screens.</p> <p>Ask everyone (with video on) to stand up, and out-stretch their arms side to side. Then back up until their arms are touching the edges of their video frame (imagining you’re in a box bounded by the webcam).</p> <p>Each person should think of something lovely/kind to share with another person and hold that idea in their hands like a ball.</p> <p>Then everyone will “pass” that Love to a person in the frame to Left, Right, Top or Bottom of their frame...And as someone passes something to you then you will “receive” it by reaching to that side of that side of video frame, and “pass” it along to another side of the video frame.</p> <p>So you are “receiving” and “passing” Love around the video group. Everyone is moving, and passing (and also reaching, stretching, etc).</p>
Face-to-face version:	<p>Start by “handing” one person an invisible/imaginary gift. (It’s helpful if you have co facilitator or buddy for this first step, so they can demonstrate the proper response). Be as expressive as possible with your body language to indicate something about the size / weight / potential contents of the gift. As you hand it over, the only thing you’re allowed to say is “Here, [person’s name], I got you a gift.”</p> <p>The person to whom you handed it has to receive the gift and name it, responding to the body language. (“Wow, thanks for this... bicycle! It’s such a pretty hot pink colour!”)</p> <p>And then they give a gift to the next person, and so on, until everyone has gone.</p> <p>This can work well in a session in which you’re working with listening skills and empathy-building because the “receiver” is like the listener and has to respond to what the giver/speaker puts out there.</p>

Name:	Shred your Woes
Duration:	10mins
Online version:	<p>Ask students to get a piece of paper or online notepad (for virtual usage) and check-in with each other on their mental and physical health and academic journey thus far. You may provide prompts such as</p> <p>“how do you feel about this course?”</p> <p>“what is on your mind unrelated to this class meeting?”</p> <p>Ask students to write their own responses down on their paper and reassure students that they don’t have to share their answers if they don’t want to. After five minutes, ask students to rip up their pieces of paper and discard their responses. This exercise helps students identify their state of mind and let go of any concerns they may have.</p>
Face-to-face version:	As above

Name:	“Make a web”
Duration:	10-15 mins
Online version:	<p>Trainer prepares a slide/whiteboard with the names of each participant written in a circle. One participant is asked to pick a number. The trainer will ask the question on their list associated with that number (see appendix 1). When the participant has answered the question they should pick the next participant to answer. The trainer draws a line from the first participant’s name to the second’s. That participant then picks a number and so on. When everyone’s name is connected by the line, ask them to examine the web and point out that it would not be the same if any one member of the group was elsewhere.</p>
Face-to-face version:	<p>Gloves may be needed.</p> <p>One participant is given a roll of string and asked to pick a number. The trainer will ask the question on their list associated with that number. When the participant has answered the question they should hold on to the end of the piece of string and throw the roll to another participant. That participant then picks a number and so on. When everyone is holding on to the string at some point examine the web and point out that it would not be the same if any one member of the group was elsewhere.</p>

APPENDIX 1

Make a Web Questions

- 1) If you could meet anyone, from history or contemporary, who would it be and why?
- 2) What would be the first law you passed if you were made ruler of the world?
- 3) If you could date any cartoon character, who or what would it be?
- 4) If you were given a million euro and told you could not donate any of it, what would you do with it?
- 5) You have to sing karaoke, what song do you pick?
- 6) Who would play you in a movie about your life?
- 7) If you were stranded on a desert island with the choice of one book (other than a religious text) what book would you choose?
- 8) Which sci-fi invention would you like to see put into production and why?
- 9) If you could invite any 3 people, in addition to friends and family, to a dinner party who would you ask?
- 10) If you could instantly become an expert in something, what would it be?
- 11) If you could make it illegal to say any one word or phrase, what would you ban?
- 12) If you could pick any celebrity to make a guest appearance at your next birthday party who would you choose?
- 13) What's your favourite procrastination technique?

- 14) If you could have been told one thing about your life when you were 15 what would you like to have heard?
- 15) What's the weirdest food you've ever eaten?
- 16) What was your favourite toy as a child?
- 17) Which part of your body do you like the most and why?
- 18) What's the worst chat up line you've ever heard?
- 19) What's the weirdest present anyone ever gave you?
- 20) What was the last fancy dress costume you wore?
- 21) What daily task in your personal life would you want a robot to take over?
- 22) If you were famous, what would you be famous for?
- 23) If you were a wrestler what would be your entrance theme song?
- 24) What would the title of your autobiography be?
- 25) What image is the screen saver on your phone?