

## Workshop Activity Bank for Participant Engagement

This activity bank provides facilitators with structured, ready-to-use engagement ideas drawn from three orientations: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Mindfulness-Based, and Gestalt. Each activity includes a brief description and instructions.

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### CBT-Oriented Activities

1. **Thought Record Exercise** – Guide participants to write down a troubling thought, identify the distortion, and generate a balanced alternative.
2. **Cognitive Restructuring Pairs** – In pairs, one person shares a negative belief and the other helps reframe it into a more realistic statement.
3. **Behavioral Activation List** – Participants list small enjoyable activities and schedule one into their week.
4. **Problem-Solving Steps** – Walk through defining a problem, brainstorming solutions, and selecting one actionable step.
5. **Socratic Questioning Circle** – As a group, generate challenging questions for automatic negative thoughts.
6. **Positive Data Log** – Write down three pieces of evidence each day that contradict a negative core belief.
7. **Graded Exposure Planning** – Map out steps to face a feared situation gradually, then role-play the first step.
8. **Coping Card Creation** – Make small cards with coping statements to counter recurring unhelpful thoughts.
9. **Role-Play Cognitive Reframing** – Practice responding to a stress-inducing situation with alternative perspectives.
10. **Strengths Inventory** – List personal strengths and identify how each can be applied to current challenges.

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### Mindfulness-Based Activities

1. **Three-Minute Breathing Space** – Guide a short practice moving from awareness of breath, to body, to the present moment.
2. **Body Scan** – Slowly bring attention to different body parts, noticing sensations without judgment.
3. **Mindful Eating** – Provide a small snack and invite participants to notice taste, texture, and smell with full awareness.
4. **Five Senses Grounding** – Identify five things you see, four hear, three touch, two smell, one taste.
5. **Mindful Walking** – Invite slow, deliberate walking, focusing on each step and contact with the ground.
6. **Thought Clouds Visualization** – Imagine thoughts drifting by like clouds, observed without attachment.
7. **Compassionate Friend Visualization** – Envision receiving kind words from a trusted friend or mentor.
8. **Anchor Breath Practice** – Return attention repeatedly to the breath when distracted.

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9. **Sound Awareness** – Focus attention on ambient sounds, noting their qualities without labeling good or bad.
10. **Loving-Kindness Meditation** – Silently repeat phrases of goodwill toward self, others, and the group.

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## Gestalt-Oriented Activities

1. **Empty Chair Dialogue** – Speak to an imagined person or part of self in an empty chair, then switch roles.
2. **Exaggeration Technique** – Amplify a gesture or posture to explore its emotional meaning.
3. **Topdog vs. Underdog Roleplay** – Act out the internal critic and the resisting self in dialogue.
4. **Here-and-Now Awareness Round** – Each participant shares present sensations, feelings, and thoughts.
5. **Sentence Completion** – Begin with prompts like “Right now I feel...” and finish spontaneously.
6. **Dream Enactment** – Act out a dream scene, with group members taking roles of dream elements.
7. **Hot Seat Process** – One participant takes the “hot seat” for direct engagement with the facilitator and group.
8. **Awareness Continuum** – Invite participants to track what they are aware of moment by moment and voice it aloud.
9. **Body Dialogue** – Speak as if different body parts had voices, sharing messages or needs.
10. **Experiment with Polarities** – Identify a personal polarity (e.g., strong/weak) and act out both sides before integrating.

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