HAP Session Structure with Sample Activities

Each 2 hour session consists of 4-8 arts-based mindfulness activities with 1 primer (warm up) activity and 1 closing activity. The following are some examples:

**Primer Activity**

**Turbo and Tonka Trucks:**
Each participant is asked to state their name and something that they like starting with the beginning letter of their first name. Once everyone in the group has had a turn, participants can be encouraged to repeat everyone’s name and what they like.

**Mindfulness**

**Thought Jar:** Using an empty glass jar half-filled with water, participants take various shaped and colored beads or bobbles which could represent thoughts and feelings, and drop them into the jar one by one. The jar is then shaken and a discussion is started about how we feel when we have many thoughts and feelings all swirling around in our minds versus how we feel when our minds are calmer and more focused (when the objects have settled to the bottom of the jar).

**Art**

**Feelings Inventory:** Group members are invited to think of all of the different feelings they experienced over the course of the day. These feelings are written down on a piece of paper. On another piece of paper, the participants divide their pages into the feelings they had throughout the day depicting by size how much of the day they felt each feeling. Each feeling should be clearly identified by symbols, words, and/or colours. Finally, group members are asked to take turns sharing their ‘Feelings Inventory’ with the group. Discussions can be had about which types of feelings the participant would like to experience.

**Break & Snack**

- fresh fruit
- popcorn
- juice

**Tai Chi**

Visualize yourself as a butterfly. Take a deep breath. Place your feet shoulder width apart, bend your knees slightly, and relax the arms at your side. (exhale) Slowly lift up your arms up to shoulder height while breathing in. Keep your eyes slightly open while performing this movement. Repeat the up and down movements 7 times. Each time, breathe in while lifting up the arms and breathe out while lowering the arms.

**Closing Activity**

**Rock Closing:**
Each participant takes a turn holding the rock and explaining what they enjoyed about the group session, what they learned, or what they did not enjoy about the session.

**Group Cohesion & Strengths**

**Warm Fuzzies:** Each group member decorates an envelope with their name on it. During each group session the group members are encouraged to write a “warm fuzzy” (a compliment, praise, something positive) about each group member and about themselves, and then place these messages in the envelopes. The group can discuss how reading positive things about themselves makes them feel as well as how saying something positive about a fellow group member feels. At the end of each session, the participants can take their warm fuzzies home.

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