



## **AW facilitator resource kit.**

### LETTING GO

#### **purpose.**

A follow-on process from the Visioning, this Letting Go process creates a space for participants to identify and symbolically 'let go of' blocks and barriers which are preventing them from moving towards their future vision. As AW facilitators in the field we constantly must let go.

Let go of getting it right, let go of controlling a situation, let go of the plan to follow where the inquiry leads us.

In life letting go is something we do regularly, sometimes with intention, sometimes without. Often it occurs out of necessity, willingly or unwillingly, with trepidation, and often in anger. It is almost always uncomfortable or even painful.

Energy cannot be created or destroyed so we move it. We shift focus. Let go of looking at something from one way and move toward looking at it from a new perspective. Our character traits/strengths are a great example. What serves us some of our lives may need to shift or change in its form to serve us into the future.

#### **delivery.**

During AW programs, when we leave childhood behind, we do it with awareness of what we want/need to let go of and what we want to bring with us going into adulthood.

What is essential is giving identity and meaning to what we wish to let go. Make the intangible clear and definite. We become aware, we accept, we act (the three A's).

Letting go can become something we do regularly like exercise, with intention and purpose.

The most important aspects of facilitating this process are allowing participants the time to reflect on what their blocks/barriers are and to then create a meaningful way for them to let them go.

#### **Example 1:**

You could use the Visioning process as a primer for this one, and then consider the following example script as a guide for framing up the Letting Go process:

*"From time to time we may recognize aspects of ourselves that are starting to become less useful, possibly even blocking our growth. These aspects of us may have been something that helped us thrive when we were younger, or fit in, or survive difficult times, or make sense of things we couldn't make sense of them. Now that we are becoming young adults, these things may begin to hold us back. What are some examples of obstacles that might hold us back from realising our vision? "*

NOTE: If your group needs it, a story can be very useful here as well, modelling what you mean by a block or barrier by sharing one for you that you are prepared to leave behind after the program.

Invite participants to go out into the bush and retrieve one thing to represent a barrier they are ready to break down and let go of, then find a meaningful way to do that (some ideas below).

#### **Example 2: Child/adult behaviour model, creating awareness of self**

Randomly split the group into smaller groups. (4-5 groups of at least 3)

- Use a deck of cards – go with other hearts, spades, clubs, diamonds
- Summer, Autumn, Winter, Spring Birthdays

If the group needs a little energy throw in a quick connecting game – balancing challenge, new handshakes, 123 competition...



If the group needs to settle down and focus on each other give them a question to answer – “What is your favourite memory from primary school?” “What has been your favourite vacation and why?” “Where’s your favourite place to relax?”

#### FRAMING

*“We’ve spent some time looking at healthy child/adult behaviour to support us to become more aware of what is changing as we grow in to adulthood and to help us make choices for ourselves around our thinking and actions. We are going to spend some time now reflecting and delving more deeply in to the behaviours that we want to explore and develop skills around. We will come up with some specific plans for developing our adult way of being.”*

Hand out the child/adult thinking model (one to each group). Take the time to make sure everyone understands the behaviours. Maybe have the groups take turn reading them out loud. Then have the whole group identify the 4 behaviours they think their cohort struggles with the most. If you have more than 4 groups then pick another behaviour you think would benefit them to examine more closely. Once they choose, assign a behaviour to each small group and ask them to become the experts on this behaviour. They will present to the other groups, sharing what best practices or strategies they come up with.

Guide them with questions specific to each group. Give them at least 5 minutes for step 1-4.

**Step 1:** To start, for the behaviour ask where it most shows up in themselves, others, their communities, the world. Get them to capture as much of it on paper as possible.

For example:

- *“Where do you most often find yourself competing with others? Why is that?”*
- *“Where do we only care about ourselves, or only care for others? What does that look like in ourselves, our peer groups, relationships?”*
- *“Where do you find your body image driving your identity? Where does that feel important? Why does it matter so much?”*
- *“Where do we look for peer group acceptance? Why it important to us?”*

#### STEP 2:

- *“What is the price of not behaving in this healthy way?”*
- *“What might happen if we do not compete, or don’t care how we look, or don’t let out our feelings, or take responsibility when we do something bad, or seek male approval?”*  
Try to frame the natural tension and pressure of why this is a challenge.
- *“Does it make sense that this is hard for us to work out sometimes?”*
- *“What are the different needs that might be in conflict?”*

#### STEP 3: Now ask:

- *“What are the benefits of the healthy adult behaviour?”*  
*and ask them to capture as much of that as possible on another piece of paper.*
- *“What does the healthy behaviour look like?”*
- *“What is the impact on ourselves and others?”*
- *“Where do we see people balancing care? How?”*
- *“Where do we see people building circles of support?”*
- *“What does it look like when we manage our emotions?”*
- *“What happens when we take full responsibility for our actions?”*
- *“What are the qualities of a healthy person in relationship with us? How are we with them?”*
- *“What does self-acceptance look like? What gets in the way?”*



- *“What is the impact of always striving for perfection?”*
- *“What is the impact of not building healthy adult behaviour? Where do we see adults behaving like children out in the world?”*

#### STEP 4:

- *“What skills/strategies can they build to cultivate healthy adult behaviour for themselves?”* Get specific and capture it on paper.
- *“How do we build in self-care? What are the specific ways we can practice self-care?”*
- *“How do we grow our self-acceptance? How do we make body image matter less? How do we really come to like/accept ourselves?”*
- *“How do we grow the relationships we wish to have?”*
- *“How can we develop emotional awareness and management?”*
- *“How do we compete less with others? What do we focus on instead?”*
- *“What are the ways we can now be taking more responsibility for ourselves and our actions?”*

#### STEP 5: (4 to 5 minutes per group)

Have each group pick a representative or two and share their findings with the group. Ask others from outside the group to contribute their ideas and what works for them. Invite the group to write down anything that they want to remember for themselves separately. See if the group can agree on a couple of group actions they could take together to build the community they want. (example: we are going to get two separate social circles to sit together at lunch) Can they be specific? Next Thursday at lunch we will meet on the oval steps.

#### STEP 6: (5-10 minutes)

When all groups have presented, separate out into individual space and move the group in to relaxation/reflection. Ask the group to have a think about what has most resonated for them personally in this session. *“Have there been any “aha” moments?”* *“What behaviour resonates most with you right now?”*

Invite them to record in their journals or on paper what they want to STOP, START, KEEP doing for themselves to build healthy adult behaviour. Remind them this bit is just for them and they do not need to share it with anyone unless they want to. Feel free to model examples from your life.

*“Right now, I am practicing balancing care. I’m trying to STOP putting my family before me in the little things. When I cut up a mango, I make sure I get some too.”* *“Right now, I KEEP surrounding myself with people who love me for who I already am.”* *“Right now, I’ve STARTED taking my own opinion to have as much value as others in my life. What I think means as much as what my dog, brother, mother, dad, husband, friends think.”*

#### STEP 7:

Once they have their STOP, START, KEEP invite them into a letting go with their STOP action.

#### **letting go the AW way.**

- Gentle – with kindness and compassion
- Acknowledge – that which we are letting go is valid
- Active – physical ceremony, ritual
- Symbolic
- Creative
- Visual



- Commitment - we are making behavioural shifts, habits of mind, body, heart, always picking at least one thing to start doing

### Ideas for Ceremonies

- Use the ritual theatre of nature
  - Sunset/sunrise
  - Day/Night
- Burn something in the fire
- Throw a stone/pebble into the ocean or river
- Release from the mountain/highest point of view
- Release to the wind
- Release to the ocean
- Build a flower/stick/leaf mandala and destroy
- Release to the sky

### **success looks like.**

- ✓ Solo time for each participant to reflect on their experience and learnings
- ✓ Participants feel safe enough to share what they are letting go of and participate wholeheartedly in the letting go process at the end
- ✓ Participants are engaged in the process of reflecting on what possible barriers exist for them