



AW facilitator resource kit.

SELF-CARE + THE RETURN

purpose.

The experience of an Into Adulthood camp with AW can be profound for participants. As facilitators, we have a responsibility to do what we can to soften the landing for students as they re-enter their life outside of camp. For many students (if we've done our job), the experience of being in nature, connecting with peers for 3-5 days is an extremely positive one. Sometimes this is followed by a return to a life that is not as positive. They may be returning to exam pressure or conflict at home or in friend groups elsewhere. The purpose of this session is to grow participants' awareness of the importance of self-care in the days and weeks following camp to give them the best chance at a soft landing.

delivery.

Framing the conversation: It is not uncommon for the return to our usual worlds to feel a bit strange. We have all experienced not just physical challenges, but also emotional and mental challenges and growth. For this session, we're going to spend a bit of time coming up with a self-care action plan for you to use when you get home. NOTE: Depending on the time you have in the program, this session can be a simple addition to the reflection session by asking group members the following questions: 1. What have you missed most from home? 2. What are your favourite ways to give yourself self-care? 3. How will you care for yourself over the next week as you re-enter your usual life? 4. How can your family and friends support your return? If you have more time, you might choose to run a more robust session, per the examples below.

Example sessions.

Example 1: Body scan

Framing conversation:

Modern life can knock us off balance often. We may have so many competing demands on us now in year 9 that things might feel a bit crazy now and then. As we move into adulthood, I want us to consider the benefit of recognising when we are out of balance in certain areas of our life. I guess we could say this could be a skill that healthy adults have that others don't. I know adults who don't even stop to consider the balance in their lives, they just plough on regardless.

Invite students into a comfortable position, inviting them to take part in a body scan before heading off on a reflection. Have the students organise their journal and pencil next to them for a smooth transition after the body scan.

Body scan meditation:

Getting comfortable in your chosen position, taking these next few moments to relax.

Take a big deep breath in to relax more deeply now. Gently closing your eyes if you feel comfortable to do so and begin to notice your breath.

Feeling your inhale expand your belly and feeling your body relax as you exhale. I will now guide you through a simple body scan...

PAUSE

Bring your awareness to your head, just noticing your head resting here, feeling it rest heavy on the ground. Gently begin to bring your awareness into your mind, just noticing



any thoughts coming up, acknowledging them and then letting them float away like clouds passing by.

As you become aware of your mind and its thoughts, take a moment to consider how your mind has been feeling lately. How has it been inside your mind? Just observing and noticing any sensations, feelings or thoughts that come up here.

PAUSE

Now begin to notice your neck and throat. Let them soften and relax. Let your jaw loosen. Letting go of any tension in your jaw, neck and throat. Softening and relaxing. Allow your face and facial muscles to be soft.

Allow your shoulders to be light. As you notice your shoulders and arms, feel them relax here. As you become the observer of yourself. Notice your hands. What do you notice? Are your hands tense or open?

Allow them to soften now. Feel the sensations in your hands and arms and let yourself soften and relax.

Feeling your whole back resting on the ground simply noticing any sensations here, just letting it all be.

Feeling your breath fill your chest and your belly once more and letting yourself relax and melt a little more.

Now bringing your awareness into your heart space. Breathing in down to your heart, feeling your breath expand into the front of your chest, and allowing yourself to feel your heart open. Opening your heart to feel, sense or see what is here in this moment.

How has your heart been lately? What has it been feeling?

PAUSE

As you breath in once more, take your breath down to your stomach, feeling your belly expand as your breath in and feeling it soften as you breath out. As you bring your attention to your stomach area, notice if your stomach is tense or tight, let it soften. Relax and take a breath.

As you continue to be the observer of your body, notice your back on the ground once more. Notice the weight, vibration, temperature, and any other sensations.

Feel your legs resting on the ground, simply becoming aware of any sensations here or in your feet. Not needing to change anything. Just simply being.

Be aware of your whole body as best you can. Take a breath here. How has your body been lately? Observing any sensations or thoughts or feelings that arise as you contemplate, how has your body been lately?

PAUSE

Take in another deep inhale and as you exhale it all out feeling your whole body relax and melt into the ground. Simply breathing here for a few moments.

Take one more big deep breath and when you're ready, you can gently wiggle your fingers and toes and open your eyes to join us back here.

Invite students to quietly get some paper and a pencil and journal their responses to the following questions:



- *How has your body been feeling lately?
Healthy, energised, strong?
Tired, sore, uncomfortable, weak?*
- *How has your mind been lately?
Busy, overwhelmed, negative?
Calm, positive, collected?*
- *How has your heart been feeling lately?
Loved, peaceful, joyous?
Sad, frustrated, unheard?*
- *Have you felt in balance lately? Why or why not?*
- *How can you support yourself with more self-care moving forward?*

Debrief:

Come back to a circle and invite the group or a few people to share.

- *Why is self-care important?*
- *Why is it important to consider all areas of ourself such as our body, mind and heart?*

When it comes to your wellbeing and mental health, self-care can help you manage stress, lower your risk of illness, and increase your energy. Even small acts of self-care in your daily life can have a big impact.

Self-care requires checking in with yourself and asking yourself how you're doing physically, mentally, and emotionally. Self-care does not mean the same thing for everyone. Different people will adopt different self-care practices, and even your own definition might change over time.

- *Does anyone have any strategies to maintain their self-care?*
- *How do you look after you body, mind and heart?*

Example 2: Start, stop, keep

Framing conversation:

Modern life can knock us off balance often. We may have so many competing demands on us now in year 9 that things might feel a bit crazy now and then. As we move into adulthood, I want us to consider the benefit of recognising when we are out of balance in certain areas of our life. I guess we could say this could be a skill that healthy adults have that others don't. I know adults who don't even stop to consider the balance in their lives, they just plough on regardless.

Prompt the discussion to consider these influences:

- What is self-care?
- How do you make sure you are able to operate at your best?
- How are we going with getting regular sleep?
- How are we going with getting good food?
- How are we going in relationship with friends/ family?
- How are we going with getting exercise?
- How are we going with getting time away from technology?
- How are we going with the expectations of people around us?

STOP START KEEP

"Now I want you to take 3 minutes alone to consider three things: What will you stop, start and keep doing to bring about more of what you need and less of what you don't need,



physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually? I want you to grab an object or some objects from the surrounding bush to symbolise your STOP, START and KEEP, and come back when I tell you ready to share with us." Whole group share: What will you stop, start and keep doing? Debrief popcorn style: What similarities were there in what we each shared? Pair share: Now I want you to consider, which 2 or 3 people in your life could you count on for support at times when you feel overwhelmed? Who do you know would help you get back on track?"

success looks like.

- ✓ Participants have a developed understanding of what self-care is and why it's important
- ✓ Participants leave the program with a plan for their safe return



session example 1.

Group
Program
Session Length

20 x Year 6s
Activity-Based
30min

Delivery

Step one: Priming the group & framing the session (10min)
On any activity-based program, time for a values discussion is going to be short, so facilitator focus should be on making the discussion fun and meaningful in the time allocated.
Options for a fun, high-energy primer include:

- [Finding Nemo](#) (opens discussion about deception/ behaviours we value/don't value)
- [Elevator Air](#) (opens discussion about how we choose to show up to different situations, i.e. camp)

Step two: Group must agree on THREE key values (10min)
Facilitators may choose to use [Values Courtroom](#) or AW values flash cards. Split the group into THREE smaller groups and have each group whittle the values down to ONE each.

Step three: Initiate the group (10min)
Challenge the group to come up with a way to initiate each member into the tribe – it must include a commitment to honour the three values chosen.
This might look like a tribe name and handshake, a chant, dance. Whatever they like – get creative! Also encourage the students to use the surrounds (mud/river/flowers/leaves etc.).

session example 2.

Group
Program
Session Length

15 x Year 9s
Into Adulthood
60min

Delivery

Step one: Priming the group (15min)
Run a game of [Poker Face](#).

Step two: De-brief Poker Face (15min)
Using the questions in the activity sheet, leading into a discussion that is relevant to the group. How do we want to treat each other? The environment? Others we encounter?

Step three: Challenge the group to agree on 4-6 values (15min)
These values should serve to optimise their experience and increase the levels of safety and fun in the group.

Step Four: Initiate the group (15min)
Challenge the group to come up with a way to initiate each member into the tribe – it must include a commitment to honour the three values chosen.

session example 3.

Group
Program
Session Length

20 x Corporates
Team-Building Day
30min

Delivery

Step One – Prime the group (15min)
Get participants engaged in an activity, such as [poker face](#). As adults, there is a chance they will grasp the concepts raised in the de-brief nice and quick, so you can move on to a discussion about values.



Step Two – Decide on THREE key values (15min)

Challenging the group to keep the number to just three ensures participants are required to only choose values with the most meaning.

NOTE: If pressed for time, the discussion could be as simple as getting the group to stand in a circle, holding on to a large circular rope with a knot in it. Pass the knot around and as it lands with each person, have them answer the question: “What do you need from the group to feel safe and to maximise your chance of fun?”

success looks like.

- ✓ Participants have bought in to the values that they have chosen
- ✓ Participants are aware of the values and they come up throughout the program
- ✓ Conduct of the participants is reflective of the values chosen
- ✓ Facilitator can use values to support de-briefs and conflict resolution discussions

other things to consider.

- ✓ Participants have bought in to the values that they have chosen
- ✓ Participants are aware of the values and they come up throughout the program
- ✓ Conduct of the participants is reflective of the values chosen
- ✓ Facilitator can use values to support de-briefs and conflict resolution discussions