

## **Focus Group info and directives**

### *Technical Components*

Time: Approximately 60 mins

Platform: In Person

Tech needs: access to projector to show powerpoint, can use personal machine or save the ppt to a drive you can access remotely

Recording: Only with full consent in the course forms and in person by all students at the time of the session. One disagreement or missing paperwork constitutes no recording.

Facilitation: UoL Research Team-Run by Kara Blackmore

Ideal participation: is 5-10 students

### *Guiding Principles/Ethos*

Sensibility must be interactive and feel like an extension of the mini-course.

- We, the participants and facilitators agree to arrive on time for the beginning of each session.
- Participants may ask questions freely at any time. (There is no such thing as a ‘stupid question’.)
- We aim to listen to a person’s full opinions or ideas and not react immediately: in this way we can consider what we really think of a new or opposing idea, instead of just reacting to it.
- We will try to do our set tasks to the best of our ability.

### *Focus Group Format*

*-play Stormzy as they enter if time permits*

#### **Setting the Stage**

Begin by asking if anyone knows what a focus group is? Explain the parameters of the session, what you are going to do, what it is for, what will be done with the information

\*This is a kind of interactive discussion to ensure participants are aware of the details of the session. It is also the time to get permission for recording.

#### **Getting to Know each other**

The session begins with an introduction and energiser where students are asked to share their name (on a name card and verbally) and to tell the facilitator a subject they are passionate about or a hobby they have.

\*Allow at least 45 seconds to 2 mins per student. Here pauses are okay and you can allow silence to hold the space while they find their voice

**First Directive (laying the groundwork for the contributions to a thick narrative):**

Select an image that represents your COVID-19 pandemic experience?

-The students do a rapid selection through the printouts. Facilitator distributes random stacks to students and asks them to discard the ones they don't want to their neighbour so that the images always circulate. They are then encouraged to present their rationale or to write it on a post-it note on the image.

\*if you see students picking similar images then you can link them to get a dialogue going

**Second Directive: Local and Global (to engage diversity, international concerns and intimate discussions):**

Select images that speak to the local and global aspects of the pandemic.

-This could be relating to things happening inside your home, neighbourhood, school, country as the local or global as in international sometimes singling other nations, universalism or foreign language seen on the images

\*can ask them to do one of each depending on how chatty they are

**Third Directive: Politics and Power (to engage criticality and agency)**

Select images that speak to the topic of politics and power.

-this could be relating to your own power or power of other key figures in the pandemic or , power of politicians. Politics is both relating to government and social politics, i.e. the politics of the body or politics of vaccinations

\*often takes the most encouragement given a low political literacy amongst students

**Fourth Directive: In Your Own Words (to put language to conversation/narrative building)**

Write 2-3 words on the post-it notes that reflect the pandemic. Some words might be new to you, have changed meaning or been invented through this time. Some words might have more than one definition.

\*If students are getting stuck on this they can pair up to discuss with other students.

**Fifth Directive: Sketch and Reflect (use drawing and time as a tool to think about future by reflecting on the past)**

Imagine your post-pandemic utopia. What does the world look like after this is over? Is it over now? How is that reality different from the past?

\*they will need blank paper and drawing pencils as well as colouring options (crayons or coloured pencils)

\*can be helped by returning to the first image they picked and draw the after, can use time stamps to show future

\*students are encouraged to share and caption this work

### **Course Reflection (review the course from their perspective)**

What do you think of this course?

\*it is an open question that can be reframed based on the survey questions to get more in-depth feedback

\*this section is sometimes compromised by the time allocated.

### **Dissemination and Feedback ( Info on the team, partners and how to stay connected)**

\*you can often stay behind and have an informal chat with the teacher or some students who don't have class right after

-after each directive take the images and post-it notes and set them aside to be entered in for analysis

-write a reflection diary after the session, give more detail to those that are not recorded