



## TEAM BONDING ACTIVITIES FACILITATORS GUIDE



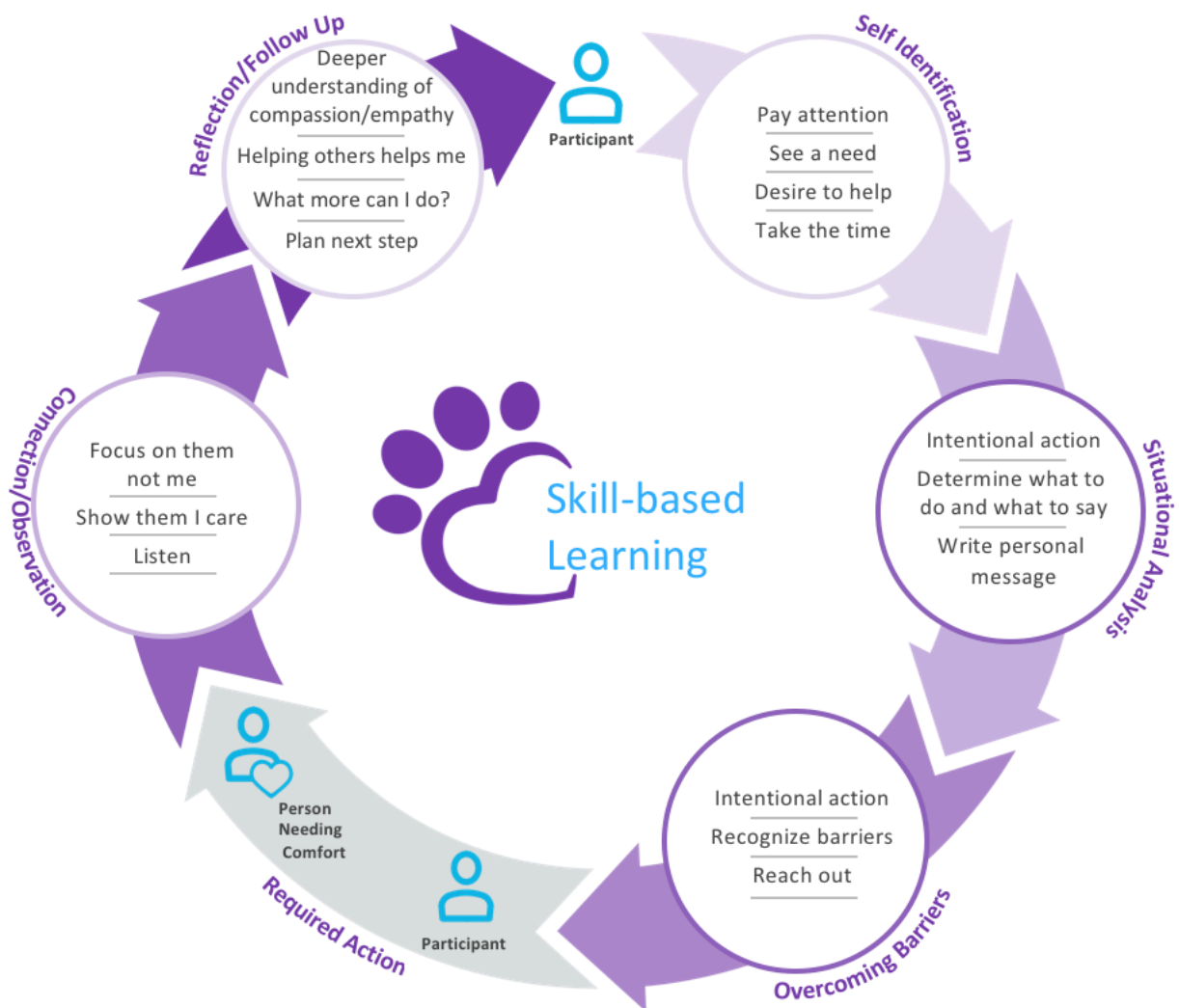
Every day, a growing number of your employees are struggling. Many with serious issues that they cover up, not wanting to bring their problems into the workplace. Many of these same people don't have a network outside of work to help them through these difficulties. They come to work in crisis, their productivity is lowered, and they feel alone and isolated.

And we feel it ourselves, when we have our own personal challenges going on. We're always in a rush, and wherever we go, we can be found looking down at our phones, not up at the people around us. We don't notice each other in pain, we don't take the time to look for those in pain and even if we do, too often we don't do enough to help.

Maybe we don't know what to say or are afraid to make things worse. Maybe we just feel too uncomfortable to try and form a real connection with someone. Comforting doesn't come naturally, and today the barriers that prevent it – what we call the Awkward Zone™ – are stronger than ever. We turn inward, give in to second guessing and, within minutes, our impulse to act is gone leading to feelings of guilt. Wanting to do something but failing to act. But people all around us are still hurting. So how can we break through these barriers to connect with those in need? How can we actually embrace these times of trial to help the overall health of our team? Read on...

# "What Does Project Comfort Teach?"

1. **Self-Identification:** Helping participants see a need and taking the time to help others who are struggling or hurting.
2. **Situational Analysis:** Taking the time to think about the situation and finding the right words and messages that might help the receiver.
3. **Overcoming Barriers:** Taking intentional action to reach out to someone.
4. **Connection / Observation:** In connecting with others, we learn to focus on them and not us and observe how that feels.
5. **Reflection / Follow Up:** It is in the reflecting of how this process makes us feel that we learn that helping others truly does help us and we follow up and do it again.





## Suggested Team Bonding Activity Options

*"The more you do, the more the skill is developed"*

	45 Minute Craft Activity	One Session 90-120 minutes Team Bonding	Two Sessions 60- 90 minutes at each session	Three Sessions 60-90 minutes at each session
<b>Description</b>	An activity with a purpose. Keep supplies in your break room for some therapeutic art therapy. Helping others while calming yourself.	Participants will complete a self reflective questionnaire and then be randomly paired with another participant. They will share their answers, diving deep into each others stories. They will then make a plaque for each other.	Second session will focus on to identify individually and as a team who around you is hurting and come up with a strategy to create plaques for them and help them in other ways.	Third Session will allow your team to create plaques for more people identified in the second session and dive deeper into others in the company and community that could use comfort. Having 3 sessions also allows for sharing experiences from the first two sessions.
<b>Overview / Welcome</b>		10 minutes	15 minutes	15 minutes
<b>Paws to Ponder</b>		15+ minutes	N/A	N/A
<b>Paws to Look See Remember</b>		N/A	10+ Minutes	10+ Minutes
<b>Discussion Time</b>		30+ Minutes	20+ minutes	20+ minutes
<b>Creative Time</b>		30+ Minutes	30+ minutes	30+ minutes
<b>Wrap/Picture Time</b>		10 minutes	10 Minutes	10 Minutes
<b>Giving Time</b>	Done after session	Done after session	Done after session	Done after session
<b>Reflecting</b>	Done after session	Done after session	Done after session	Done after session

# Want a Little Deeper Skill Development With your Bonding Activity?

Download our three lessons and use as you feel appropriate with your sessions. These lessons are foundational for understanding how to break through the barriers that can exist.

You can **add extra time in the initial welcome section** to talk through these if you so desire.

## Our 3 Core Lessons

### Lessons We Learn From Dogs



**#1 - Lessons We Learn from Dogs:** How man's best friend can often be our best example for learning how to comfort others.



**#2 - Learning Comfort as A Skill:** This lesson introduces the Awkward Zone™ and the differences between kindness & comfort. The barriers that currently exist which stop us from comforting and connecting with others are also in this lesson.

### The Circle of Comfort



**#3 - The Circle of Comfort:** This lesson demonstrates how comforting others not only helps those who need comfort, but it helps us too.

# Outline for Team Bonding Sessions

## Set Up Time


Allow for time to set out your supplies. The more organized the supplies are set up, the better the session will run.

- Average Length of Time: 5-10 Minutes prior to participants arriving
- Materials needed: Core Comfort Kit / Worksheets printed, table surfaces covered where needed.
- Materials set out and organized: plaques sorted by color, plastic cups for markers, small bowls for bling and glue, pencils, etc. Hand Sanitizer on hand if possible for ink clean up.

## Session Worksheets

**Paws to Ponder: Average Time 45 minutes to 60 Minutes**

If you are doing only one session, this is the worksheet you will use to start the program. The questions on this sheet are meant to get the person really thinking about their life. At this point, **they should not know** that they will be sharing this information. We need them to be honest with themselves. After they have these worksheets completed (15-30 minutes) randomly pair them with someone else in the group. Recap how critical trust is. Encourage them to share as much as possible with their paired partner. The more time you give them the closer they will bond. Once completed they should grab a paw for thought worksheet and start creating their plaque for their paired partner.



CLUB  
COMFORT

Paws  
TO PONDER

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Rate your happiness on a scale of 1-10

2. If you could have one superpower. What would it be and how would you use it?

3. List 3 things that make you happy:

1.

2.

3.

4. What situation are you facing right now that you wish you could wake up and it would be gone?

5. What are you most grateful for?

6. Name something that makes you unique. Are you proud of it?

7. What is the hardest part of your typical day?

8. What 3 words do you think most describe you?

1.

2.

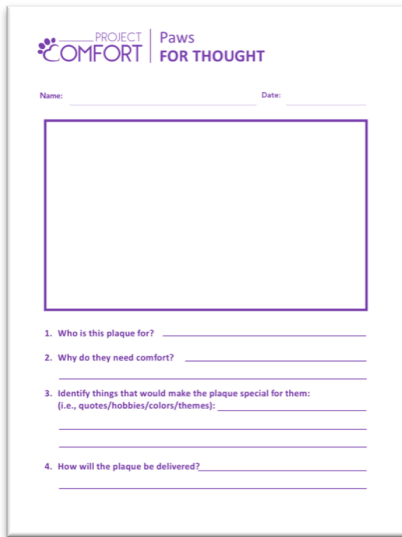
3.

## Paws to Look – See – Remember: 5-15 Minutes

If you are doing 2 or more sessions, you will start with this worksheet at sessions 2 & 3.

We start our process by prompting participants to PAWS and take note of those around us. To **look** up from phones, watch for social cues and **see/observe** who is hurting. We also need to **remember** those we already *know* are hurting. Who did we give/send a “sad face emoji” to? Who did we tell we would pray for? To whom did we say, “wow I’m so sorry to hear that”? Capture these names on a worksheet. These are the people in their lives that they can be compassionately connecting with. Spend time prompting them on who they can add to this sheet and encourage them to keep adding to this sheet whenever they learn of someone needing comfort.

[illegible]



**PROJECT COMFORT | Paws FOR THOUGHT**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Who is this plaque for? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Why do they need comfort? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Identify things that would make the plaque special for them:  
(i.e., quotes/hobbies/colors/themes): \_\_\_\_\_

4. How will the plaque be delivered? \_\_\_\_\_

## Paws for Thought: 5-10 Minutes

What can we do to bring comfort to the person we've selected? What message would this person like to hear? Each situation is different. These are not random crafts. Participants will use this worksheet to sketch their thoughts. The message on the back of the plaque is uniquely theirs. Participant should pick an appropriate message for the situation. They should make it personal, special and unique.



**CLUB COMFORT | Paws TO CREATE**

**TAKE YOUR TIME -- DON'T RUSH!**

1. Refer to your completed Paws for Thought worksheets during this process.
2. Start by selecting your plaque -- pick the perfect color.
3. Grab a pencil and a black Sharpie.
4. Start by **writing your message** on the back of the plaque with a Sharpie marker.
5. Next use a **pencil** to sketch out your design on the front of the plaque.
6. When you're ready, take a **black sharpie** to outline your design.
7. Select colored Paint Pens and Sharpies to complete your design. Try to match the tip size of the markers with how thick you need it. Little words are hard to write with thick tips.
8. Prepare paint pens on a separate piece of paper by pressing down on the tip until the ink comes out of the tip.
9. Finish off the plaque with **glued on gems**.
10. Add a border.
11. When completed -- put your pens and supplies away and clean your area.
12. Pick up the wrapping supplies and put in an **insert card** in the bag. Please put the card on the side with the message. Don't cover up your design.
13. **To wrap** - one person should hold the corners of the bag while the other takes a blue and purple ribbon together and ties it shut.

**THINGS TO AVOID WHILE MAKING YOUR PLAQUE**

1. Please do NOT press down on paint pens when they are on your plaque! You could end up with a puddle of ink.
2. Please do not use any other glue than the one provided. Other glues don't dry in time. Glue sticks will not hold the gems over time.
3. Do not use pencil or paint pens on the back of the plaque for your message -- use a black Sharpie.

## Paws to Create: 30-60 Minutes

The creation of our Comfort Plaques is the central part of the session. They will use their completed *Paws for Thought* worksheets along with the supplies in the Comfort Kit to make their plaques.

This hands-on activity utilizes skills in creativity and communication. A personal comfort plaque is created specific to the needs of the receiver. Many times, in this step, the participant may change direction after thinking things through more deeply. The results are special and amazing. It's not about the artwork, it's all about the messaging. Take time to encourage each participant and offer compliments on their designs and chosen messages.

## Wrap Time

It's important to allow enough time at the end of the session for participants to wrap their plaques in a cello bag tied with ribbons and including an insert card.

- Average Length of Time: 5-10 Minutes
- Wrap with one purple and one blue ribbon (easiest way to tie: have someone hold the corners of the bag while the other wraps around the ribbon and ties it).
- This is a great time to reflect on all of the comfort that is about to be spread
- Please also review and hand out the Giving & Reflecting Worksheets
- Encourage picture taking to capture the moment.



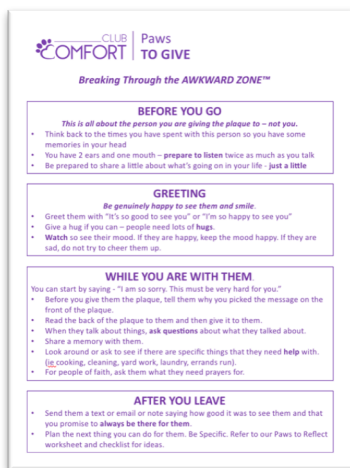
## Follow Up Sessions: Discussion Time

One of the most magical parts of the program happens when you bring participants back to talk and share their stories about connecting with those they made their plaques for. This allows for everyone to see the impact that they have had. Ideas for this share out session:

- Ask participants to capture the plaque delivery with a photo and forward to you
- Create a slideshow or newsletter or bulletin board.
- Recap how many people were comforted and where they all were.
- Celebrate the impact you made!

## Steps Done After the Session by the Participant

### Giving Time



**CLUB Paws TO GIVE**  
Breaking Through the AWKWARD ZONE™

**BEFORE YOU GO**  
This is all about the person you are giving the plaque to – not you.  
• Think back to the times you have spent with this person so you have some memories in your head  
• You have 2 ears and one mouth – prepare to listen twice as much as you talk  
• Be prepared to share a little about what's going on in your life – just a little

**GREETING**  
Be genuinely happy to see them and smile  
• Greet them with "It's so good to see you!" or "I'm so happy to see you!"  
• Give a hug if you can – people need lots of hugs.  
• Watch so see their mood. If they are happy, keep the mood happy. If they are sad, do not try to cheer them up.

**WHILE YOU ARE WITH THEM**  
You can start by saying - "I am so sorry. This must be very hard for you."  
• Before you give them the plaque, tell them why you picked the message on the front of the plaque.  
• Read the back of the plaque to them and then give it to them.  
• When they talk about things, ask questions about what they talked about.  
• Share a memory with them.  
• Look around or ask to see if there are specific things that they need help with. (eg. cooking, cleaning, yard work, laundry, errands, etc.)  
• For people of faith, ask them what they need prayers for.

**AFTER YOU LEAVE**  
• Send them a text or email or note saying how good it was to see them and that you promise to always be there for them.  
• Plan the next thing you can do for them. Be Specific. Refer to our Paws to Reflect worksheet and checklist for ideas.

**Paws to Give** - The single most important step in our program is *intentional action*. This is the step that pushes participants through the Awkward Zone. If this step is omitted, then no connection has been made. This step overcomes the “empathy-action gap” where people want to do something but fail to follow through. At Inspiring Comfort, we believe that if you want to teach connection, you should require it. That is why this step is required as part of the activity.

### Optional: Prayer Time



**PROJECT Paws TO PRAY**  
We are all called to pray for one another. Use this guide to make prayer an easy conversation with God

Heavenly Father,  
I thank you for this day and am grateful for so many things in my life, including:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Today, I am praying for \_\_\_\_\_  
Because: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
I ask you to please be close and let \_\_\_\_\_ feel your love and comfort for today and the days and weeks ahead.  
Thank you Lord, for loving me and loving \_\_\_\_\_  
In the name of your son Jesus, I pray.  
Amen.

\*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer, with thanksgiving

**Paws to Pray Worksheet:** In our faith-based clubs and for people of faith, this step completes the process. Many times, in very dark situations, prayer is the only thing that can be done. This step teaches participants to be an “anonymous donor”, asking God to continue to provide this person with peace and comfort.



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## Spread the Bonding & the Comfort

**CLUB COMFORT** | **PLAQUE REQUEST FORM**  
Spread the Comfort

**STAFF MEMBER**  
Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Best way to give me the plaque when it is completed: \_\_\_\_\_

**WHO STAFF MEMBER WANTS TO COMFORT:**  
Plaque is requested for: \_\_\_\_\_  
Reason this person can use comfort: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Any Special Requests (plaque color or favorite quote or theme: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**ASSIGNED TO:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE COMPLETED** \_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE DELIVERED** \_\_\_\_\_

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### One final idea

After you have completed your initial Project Comfort sessions, word will spread about what you are doing, and others may want to participate in comforting people they know who are hurting. Email out the "Spread the Comfort" plaque request form and start spreading the love. Participants can either come and make their own, or you could have a follow up session to complete these requests.

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