

FOCUS WORD: trust your gut

INTRODUCTION

POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES See attached

POSSIBLE RESOURCES

JOURNAL WRITING

Trust Your Gut

Purpose: To help see yourself in relationship to others and improve listening and nonverbal communication.

Group Activity: Write It Out

1. **Create teams.** Divide into two or more teams. Teams must have equal numbers.
2. **Line up.** Form a line with your team members. This activity must be done without talking.
3. **Draw a word.** The object of this game is to use your finger to draw a word on the back of the person in front of you. The first team that gets to the last person and has the correct word wins. The person at the back of the row chooses the word. [You can have words to select from or have them choose their own.]
4. **Additional rounds.** For additional rounds, have the person at the back of each line rotate to the front of the line.
5. **Debrief.** Did you trust your gut about what word you were feeling? What was it like to get it right or wrong?

Group Activity: Detective

1. **Observe.** You have one minute to observe and study your surroundings as if you were detectives. [After one minute] Now close your eyes and imagine the room we are in.
2. **Ask questions.** I will ask a variety of questions. Raise your hand and answer—but keep your eyes closed:
 - How many doors are there?
 - Point to the door that takes you to the hallway.
 - What colors are the walls, ceiling, floor?
 - What color is the rug?
 - Point to the fire extinguisher.

Note: For additional rounds, allow participants to take over the role of facilitator and/or ask more difficult or more detailed questions.

3. **Debrief.** What do you notice about what it's like to trust yourself and your memory? What was it like when you got it wrong? What was it like when you got it right? What did you learn about yourself doing this game?

Partner Activity: Shadow

1. **Pick a volunteer.** You are my shadow, so you do everything I do. [Start off slow and easy and then exaggerate and make funny movements.]
2. **First person shadows.** Find a partner. [Designate a signal to begin moving and to stop moving.] Be aware of your surroundings, so you don't run into your partner or others. [Give signal to begin.]
3. **Change roles.** [After one minute] Now change roles so both people have the chance to lead.
4. **Debrief.** What was that like? What does this game teach us about trusting our guts?



Getting Quiet

Purpose

To get present to your gut and the messages it sends you.

Prep Steps

- 1 Bell or chime. For Respect Circle alternative: paper and pens.

Alternatives

- 1 Teach participant to do the exercise on his or her own and debrief with him or her the next time you meet.
- 2 After the meditation, hand out paper and pens. For 10 minutes, ask participants to free write/draw images, words, feelings or thoughts that arose during the meditation.

ACTIVITY

Instructions

●● OPENING ●●

- 1 **Share purpose.** We're going to practice how to get more in touch with our gut and to center ourselves through meditation. Research shows that this practice can help us reduce stress or anger, be healthier, learn better, and live more successful lives. We'll start with a short 10-minute session.
- 2 **Read passage.** First I'll do a short reading by Shakti Gawain. (You can offer one of the following quotes or one of your choosing that focuses on Trust Your Gut.)

"When I'm trusting and being myself as fully as possible, everything in my life reflects this by falling into place easily, often miraculously."

"Your intuition will tell you where you need to go; it will connect you with people you should meet; it will guide you toward work that is meaningful for you—work that brings you joy, work that feels right for you."

- 3 **Facilitate meditation.** Get comfortable in your chair and put your hands on your lap.
 - Close your eyes. Let's do three deep breaths together. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. (Breathe in and out loudly to show them how it's done.)
 - Now, silently to yourself as you breathe in, say the word: peace. As you breathe out, say the word: respect. Continue this until you hear the chime. (Time them for 10 minutes, then ring bell or chime.)
 - Open your eyes slowly.
- 4 **Reflect.** Describe how you get "gut feelings" and the sensation you experience. Who will share? (Get at least three examples.) What are other ways your gut or intuition "speaks" to you?
- 5 **Debrief.** Go around the circle and share: What was that like for you? If you want to get stronger at trusting your gut, try to meditate for a short time each morning when you wake up and before you go to bed for one week. Notice how you feel and if it becomes easier to listen to yourself.

●● CLOSING ●●

Trust Your Gut

During a **R** or **L** session, you can assign a variety of journal prompts to explore this Respect Basic in writing. You can also combine the exercises of writing, speaking and listening by adding a partner sharing component or engaging the entire circle in a discussion about the journaling topic.

Journaling Topic	Prompts
My gut's messages. Today our focus is practicing self-respect by exploring trusting our gut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My gut sends me messages by ... It can feel like ... • I don't listen to my gut when ... • When I don't listen to my gut, what happens is ... • It is important that I trust my gut because ...
Role models. Today our focus is seeing who in our lives respects themselves by trusting their gut.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of my respect role models is ... • He/she practices "I matter" by trusting his/her gut when it comes to ... • I can follow his/her example and practice "I matter" by trusting my gut when it comes to ...
NOT trusting our gut. Today our focus is discovering more about what happens when we don't trust our gut.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A time I didn't trust my gut was ... • I didn't trust my gut because ... • What happened was ... • What I would do differently next time is ... • In the future, I will trust my gut because I want ...
Gut checks. Today's focus is exploring our decisions in the future based on what our gut says now.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In five years I think I will be ... • I feel like the best career for me is ... • People I trust to support me in achieving my goals are ...

•TIP!• See card #38 for additional engaging journaling questions.

JOURNAL

RESPECT BASICS

Discussion Questions

Here are some additional discussion questions you can use with a **R** or **L** to explore and practice Trust Your Gut:

- What happens in your gut when you feel scared?
- What happens in your gut when you feel nervous?
- What is the biggest error in judgment you have made in the past? What did you learn about yourself?
- What was a time when you chose to trust someone and were wrong about the person? What did your gut tell you about him or her?
- What is an important decision or choice you made but wish you had done differently?
- What are ways you make your feelings known when you disagree with someone important to you?
- What helps you make positive choices?
- What is the usual outcome of decisions you make while under pressure?
- What makes trusting your gut sometimes difficult?
- What is an example in your life of making the same choice over and over again even though you keep getting hurt?
- What do you trust about your gut feelings?
- Based on what we discussed, what's one way you are going to practice Trust Your Gut?

•TIP!• See card #62 for additional engaging discussion questions.

ACTIVITY

trust
your
GUT