



ON A HIGH NOTE

Group Discussion Questions & Activities

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Tips on Use

We believe learning is a process. We also believe in the importance of internalizing an idea before it can be applied. If you create an opportunity where people can learn about a concept and internalize why it matters, you will greatly improve the probability that people will take ownership in the solutions.

The Group Questions are divided into two sections:

- » General Review Questions
- » Creative Tension Questions

These questions are best used in a group setting to help participants discuss and process what they have learned from the program. They can also be used for independent learning.

The goal is to create dialog and discussion; making it easier to facilitate progressive learning.

In order to develop a successful training session, we recommend that you select specific questions prior to the training; choose approximately the same number of questions from both sections.

Remember that participants may be hesitant to begin discussion. Be willing to offer your own answers and thoughts to get the conversation started. Remind participants that there are no wrong answers.

Also included are four group activities (pages 6-7) to help participants better understand and apply the concepts.



Group Questions - General

- What do you remember most about the film?
- Make a list of Magdalena Müllerperth's traits that help her succeed in her work as a concert pianist.
- In your opinion, what is the most important trait needed to accomplish a difficult task? What is the least important?
- In your opinion, what is the difference between natural ability and hard work? Is one more important than the other?
- Is it possible to succeed using your natural ability without working hard? Is it possible to succeed by working hard without a lot of natural ability? Please discuss.
- In **On a High Note**, we see how Magdalena chooses to challenge and push herself instead of give up on a new piece. Do you have a tendency to push yourself when your work gets challenging? Please discuss.
- Have you ever had to give up or abandon a project you were working on because there were no clear answers? What happened?



Group Questions - Creative Tension

- Have you ever heard of creative tension before this training session?
- What does creative tension mean to you? How is it relevant in your life and work?
- What does current reality mean?
- When considering your current reality, are you able to be brutally honest about your strengths and weaknesses? Please discuss.
- If you are not forthcoming about your current reality, how can that affect your vision or goal? Has your own current reality ever become distorted?
- Think of a time when you had to solve a problem or wanted to accomplish a goal. Did creative tension play any part of your solution or success? How? Please discuss.
- Have you ever experienced a situation where the gap between your current reality and your vision was quite substantial? What did you do to ease that gap?
- What, if anything, is the difference between creative tension, stress and frustration? What tactics can you use to move past the creative tension to find a positive outcome?



Group Activities

Activity #1 – Stay Motivated

» 15 Minutes

Ask participants to take about five minutes to make a list of ways they stay motivated when faced with a challenge, or working to accomplish a goal. This list should be as creative as possible. There are no wrong answers.

After about five minutes, ask your participants to break into small groups of three or four people. Ask them to compare their lists and note any overlap between the lists. Together they should determine which are the most important to help them succeed.

If desired, come back together as a large group to discuss the findings.

Activity #2 – Easing the Creative Tension Gap

» 20 Minutes

Creative Tension is the gap that happens when you have a clear understanding of your current reality, and a clear vision of the future. The wider the gap, the greater the tension. This tension can be stressful and uncomfortable, and most want to relieve it. There are three ways to do this:

1. Lie about your current reality; make it seem like you are closer to your vision than you actually are;
2. Change your vision; make it easier to accomplish;
3. Work to make your current reality equal to your vision.

As a large group, have a discussion about the circumstances in which each of these options may be appropriate. (While choice #1 is not appropriate, it certainly happens.)

Ask participants to give examples of when they've used each of these tactics to ease creative tension. Let this turn into a free-flowing discussion, but make sure to stay on topic. Be sure to ask participants how they felt when changing their vision, versus working to making their current reality equal to their vision.

Clearly choice number three is a lot more challenging than the first two.



Activity #3 – Vision to Solution

- » 20-30 Minutes

Creative tension is the space between where you are (your current reality) and where you want to be (your vision). While creative tension can be uncomfortable and frustrating, it can also result in solutions you never previously dreamed possible.

Break up the room into three or four large groups (5-7 people each). Ask them to come up with a challenge or problem they are currently working on. Ideally the group will select an actual problem/challenge/scenario.

Ask them to come up with three different solutions to the challenge. For each solution, they should identify potential obstacles, resources needed, and a brief outline of how to make it happen. Give participants about 20 minutes to work through this exercise to develop the potential solutions.

Activity #4 – Vision Boarding

- » 45 minutes or at-home activity
- » Supplies needed: Poster board for each participant, multiple magazines, glue or tape, markers

Give each participant a large piece of poster board and several magazines and markers, and glue or tape. Give them about half an hour to find images, words, quotes, etc., to put on their vision board. Participants should create a collage full of pictures and words that correlate to their future goals both at work and at home.

If completing this project as a group, ask each participant to discuss their board.



Notes

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