

Ecology Practice Tips

PLACE AND IDENTITY

- Include place in assessments and eco maps of important relationships and places for participants.
- Picture a place where you have felt at peace, where you felt safe, where you have good memories, where you belong
- Close your eyes and visualise the place. Re-live the positive feelings it evokes for you. Breathe.
- Practise this so it's second nature when feeling stressed or anxious.

CARE FOR YOURSELF

- Exercise releases endorphins, our feel-good hormones. Encourage participants to dance, run, skip and walk.
- Learn relaxation techniques, and encourage meditation and mindfulness. Take big belly breaths, in and out.
- Take a mini break by picturing a calm place, while focusing on your breath.
- Plan ahead to stay calm – breathe deeply as you imagine calmly managing a typically stressful scene.

AWARENESS OF NATURE

- Spend time in nature – even looking out a window or at photos of nature can reduce stress.
- Walk with participants around their community – take time to notice the trees, sky and weather.
- Take time to be in the moment – when picking up participants on day of release from prison, celebrate, and see and feel the sun and air. These moments can be recalled at times of stress.

TALKING IN NATURE

- Use nature for difficult or reflective conversations with participants – take a walk, drive somewhere to sit and look, feel and hear your natural surroundings.
- Natural environments promote calmness and wellbeing – take a participant to a local green space and encourage conversation about what's around you.
- Use the Bush Hut for professional or family meetings.
- Give plants as presents.

Brought to you by the Practice Ecology Workshop at Jesuit Social Services – helping you make a strong personal and communal commitment to healing a broken world.

If you're keen to join a Practice Ecology Workshop, we'd love you to take part. Please check the Training Calendar for upcoming dates, or email Julie Boffa (julie.boffa@jss.org.au).