

co·wonders



dreamers' session

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What is it about:

- create spaces where participants can openly share personal, professional or project-related dreams
- open a floor to experiences, knowledge, networks or resources that already exists within the group
- encourage participants to support each other through active listening, feedback, sharing resources or contact to make dreams possible
- build trust and deepen the connections while developing ideas and dreams

source: Anna Bardaka, Jorge Aguado and Agata Stajer.

domains: community building, peer support, active listening, networking, personal development, collective intelligence and masterminds.

approach description:

Once, while sharing a coffee with a friend in a training course, she said: "I wish I could talk to the group about my dream, so they could help me figure out what next step I could take".

In every room with people there are experiences, skills, ideas, contacts, places, resources or stories that make it unique. Sometimes, what one person needs can be somewhere in the room. The problem is that... we rarely talk about our dreams.

The Dreamers session is a peer-support exercise where participants share something they would like to make possible: a life dream, a personal ambition, a project, or even something small they have been thinking about learning for a long time.

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This session combines active listening from the group while offering a personalised experience to the person who shares. They may ask for:

- **Listening:** “I just want to bring it out of my thoughts and say it out loud”
- **Feedback:** “Tell me what do you think or feel about this idea”
- **Advice:** “I would like some suggestions about what I could do”
- **Resources:** “Do you know someone? Do you have materials to start? Do you know something that could help me?”

It is important to make this distinction and ask the dreamer what they need at this moment. They are the ones who will decide what they ask the group for.

The aim is not to solve another person's dream. We are no magicians (yet). Sometimes the most valuable thing a group can offer is its attention and encouragement.

Further, have you ever had a “black hat” on you? This black hat is the killer of ideas and conversations. We are not seeking for moralising comments or why this idea will not work.

There will be moments for critical thinking.

The purpose is to ask: ***What could help this become possible?***

The answer may be found in collectiveness.

aim of use:

The Dreamers session aims to create a supportive space where participants can share aspirations without having to defend or justify. As opposed to an elevator-pitch, it can be used to build relationships within a group, practise active listening, uncover resources and connections, develop ideas further and transform a group from individuals to a network of mutual support.

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educational method:

- **Step 1: Introduce the Dreamers' session**

Explain to participants that in this room every person holds different experiences, resources and connections. Tell them that the aim of the session is to share a dream or an idea they had for a long time and are willing to make happen.

Some examples from our trainings (in case of doubts):

- Learning how to do DJ
- Opening a small and micro-local coffee shop
- Going on an artistic residency to another country
- Which professional path to take after uni
- Writing a small novel / fanzine

Clarify that dreams can be big, small, concrete, strange, ambitious or still unclear.

- **Step 2: Explain the rules of support**

The main rule is: the person who shares a dream decides what kind of support they need from the group.

They can choose between different options:

- Listen to me
- Give me feedback
- Give me advice
- Help me with resources
- Other (to be said by the dreamer)

A tip: put these options in a chart visible to all the groups or give some cards with the options

Remind the group to leave the black hat outside. This is not a session to evaluate if an idea or dream is realistic, profitable, efficient or easy.

Ask them to replace: *why won't this work?*

With: *What could help this forward? Can I offer something?*

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educational method:

- **Step 3: Build the groups. Time for dreams!**

Unite participants in groups of four to five people.
Explain that each participant will have their turn, and that it is not obligatory to share.

Give them the time per person more or less.

A simple structure can be:

- Share the dream while people listen actively
- Ask for the type of support they need
- The group responds in a round
- Capture useful support in a post-it (you can also give post-its to everyone and they give them to the dreamer)

Use a soft sound or a kind bell ring to let the groups know that the time for one person has come to an end.

- **Step 4: Once done, bring them back together**

Once the time is over, bring the group together to ask for a few questions or learnings.

Invite people to share their discoveries from their experience, avoiding revealing someone else's dream.

Questions you can ask:

- How was it to share the dream out loud?
- Was it difficult or easy to explain the support you wanted?
- How did it feel to listen without getting immediate advice from the people?
- What kind of support was most useful for you?
- What could happen if we asked for help more often?
- How can this workshop serve us?

Finish by reminding participants that the value of a community is not only in what each person knows individually, but also in what becomes possible when people make their knowledge, attention and networks available to each other.

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educational method:

- **Step 5:** **Extra. Step by step.**

You can ask for a final reflection from each participant.
Ask them to take a piece of paper and answer this question:

“What is the 1%* I can do today to be nearer to making my dream possible?”

*1% is something that can be done from an hour to a week of work.

Step by step is the way to reach it.

read more:

- **Book:** The Fearless Organization: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning, Innovation, and Growth. Amy C. Edmondson. Wiley, (2019)
- **Book:** Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones. James Clear. Avery, (2018)
- **Website:** What is Active Constructive Responding?
- [PositivePsychology.com](https://www.PositvePsychology.com)

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notes:

communication canvas



