



# BUILDING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

THROUGH EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

## YWCA BUILDING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES TOOLKIT

Integrating A Life Skills Approach Into Employment Training



**YWCA**  
TORONTO

NATIONAL ADVOCACY.  
COMMUNITY ACTION.



**United Way**  
Greater Toronto  
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# Canada

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The opinions and interpretations in this publication are those of the **YWCA Toronto**'s Essential Skills for Employment Project Team and do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Canada.

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For more information about this project, visit our website at [www.ywcatoronto.org/buildingfutures](http://www.ywcatoronto.org/buildingfutures) or email [buildingfutures@ywcatoronto.org](mailto:buildingfutures@ywcatoronto.org).

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**YWCA Toronto** would like to thank the Government of Canada's Adult Learning, Literacy and Essential Skills Program for funding this third phase of the national YWCA Building Sustainable Futures initiative. It has enabled us to document and share our latest promising practices and lessons learned in effective Essential Skills for Employment training programming, drawing on our YWCA Building Sustainable Futures program model. The model was originally incubated and developed through the **YWCA Toronto** Skills Development Centre, as part of a contribution to building a skilled and inclusive workforce.

**YWCA Toronto** would also like to thank our Collaborator Associations across Canada who shared their perspectives and contributed to Phase Three of the national initiative from 2019-2023.

They are:

- **YWCA Halifax**, Nova Scotia
- **YWCA Hamilton**, Ontario
- **YWCA Metro Vancouver**, British Columbia
- **YWCA Moncton**, New Brunswick
- **YWCA Montreal/Y des femmes de Montréal**, Quebec
- **YWCA Muskoka**, Ontario
- **YWCA Saskatoon**, Saskatchewan
- **YWCA St. John's**, Newfoundland & Labrador
- **YWCA Thompson**, Manitoba
- **YWCA Toronto**, Ontario

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the project, including participants, program graduates, employers and community partners too numerous to name. We would also like to thank the Essential Skills for Employment program staff team, our technical writer, and other staff at **YWCA Toronto** who supported the facilitation of this project.

We continue to be inspired in our work by the hundreds of participants and graduates who are changing their own lives and moving toward building sustainable futures for themselves and their families.

As noted within this Toolkit and the Compendium which it accompanies, some sections are primarily authored by the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures project Collaborators and may include terminology that is not currently used by **YWCA Toronto**.

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## ABOUT THE YWCA BUILDING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES PHASE THREE TOOLKIT

The YWCA Building Sustainable Futures Toolkit is an accompanying publication to the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures Compendium, which shares our latest learning from the 2019-2023 phase of the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures (BSF) project. This national participatory research initiative was designed to explore how an asset-based approach and model can help strengthen effective practices in Essential Skills for Employment (ESE) programming. The overall aim of the initiative is to enhance the career advancement and build the essential skills knowledge of systemically marginalized women—especially Indigenous, immigrant, mature and

youth—who may face particular and often intersecting challenges to building sustainable futures.

Led and facilitated by **YWCA Toronto**, and funded by the Government of Canada’s Adult Learning, Literacy and Essential Skills Program (ALLESP), the project has fostered a Collaborative of YWCA Associations across Canada representing a range of program populations, organizational capacities, and regional contexts. Phase Three of the project, described here, represents a third layer of research into our holistic model, branded through the second phase in 2014-2019 as the YWCA BSF model. Phase Three has expanded our initiative to involve close to 850 diverse individual participants, ten YWCA Collaborator Associations, and well over 700 employers and other community partners.

### A Note About Phase Three:

**Gender Focus:** When developed and launched in 2019, this phase was designed with a specific focus on women. Many of the Collaborator pilot programs for the project have since broadened their focus to include gender diverse individuals.

**Essential Skills for Employment Focus:** After the 2019 launch of Phase Three, the nine essential skills identified by the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills (OLES) were revised into a new model named “Skills for Success” (SFS) under the newly developed Skills for Success program. In October 2021, the YWCA Essential Skills for Employment (ESE) team hosted an “Introduction to Skills for Success” virtual session for YWCA BSF Collaborator staff. Led by a manager from the Employment Program Policy & Design Directorate (EPPDD), the session was an introduction to the new Skills for Success model, which will be the basis for new programs funded by the Department of Economic and Social Development Canada, Government of Canada. After the session, however, the ESE team and the Office of Skills for Success agreed that since the Collaborative was already halfway through Phase Three, and as some of these revised skill areas were still undergoing further research, we would continue using the originally defined nine OLES essential skills areas (for more detail, see Section 1.2).

The third phase coincided with the advent of the COVID-19 virus and unfolded during a time of exceptional global disruption and restrictions. Without diminishing these challenges or the common and unique hardships experienced by everyone who took part in the research, our findings show that the context of the pandemic opened new opportunities

in the field of ESE programming and has sparked a number of important innovations that will continue to influence future practices. Key project findings, including about pandemic impacts and emerging recommendations, are explored in detail in the Phase Three Compendium. They are also highlighted briefly in Section 3 of this Toolkit.

### This Toolkit is designed for:

- practitioners and any others interested in learning more about the YWCA BSF model and related tools, and Collaborators' regional adaptations of these;
- practitioners interested in learning about integrating any of the following into their programs/curricula:
  - the nine OLES essential skills/Skills for Success and emerging skills for the labour market
  - **YWCA Toronto's** adaptation of the Life Skills model for curricula and lesson plan design; and
- practitioners and any others interested in drawing on the Collaborator Lesson Plans and resources for their own program populations.

### The Compendium is designed for:

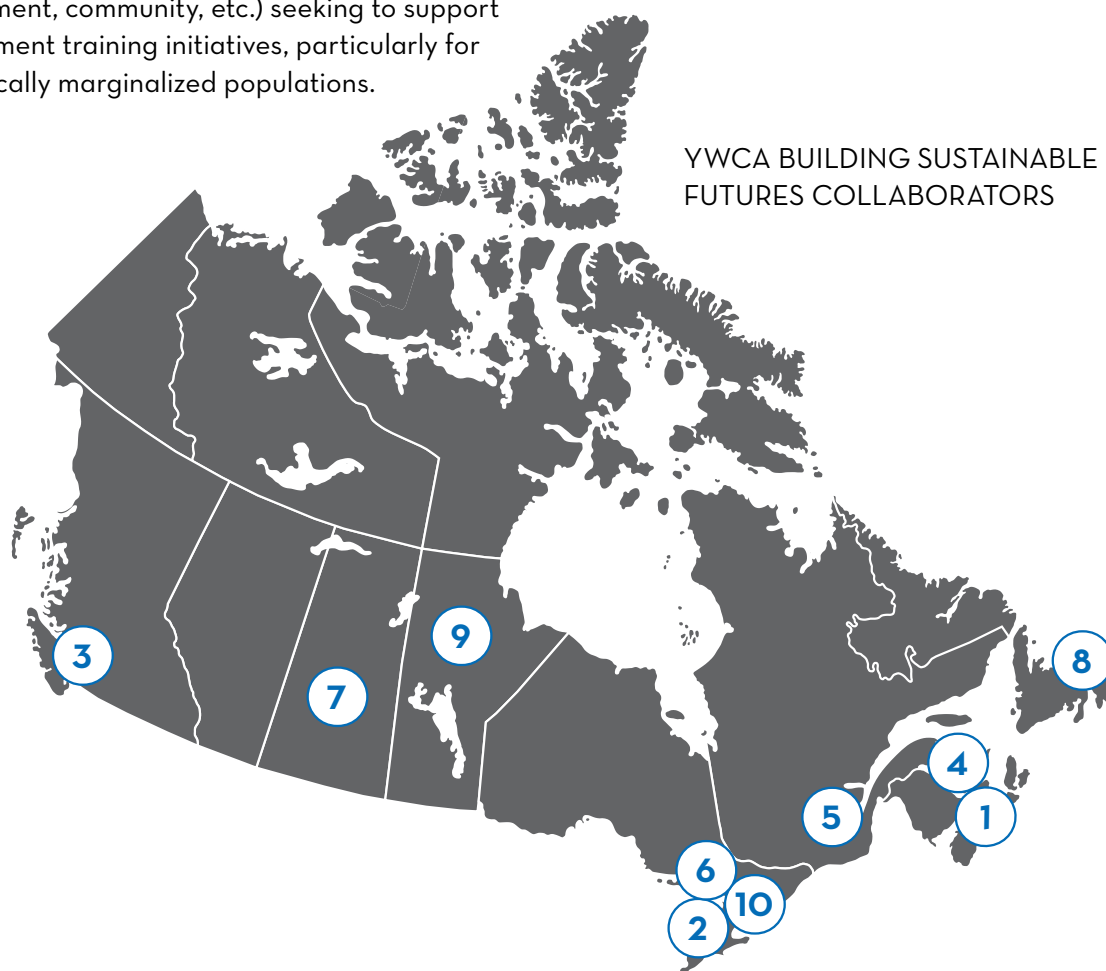
- practitioners in the field of essential skills training who are seeking to find and test new ways to build the capacity of their programs;
- private sector entities seeking to learn more about how to partner with the non-profit sector to build a skilled and inclusive workforce; and
- other individuals and entities (philanthropic, government, community, etc.) seeking to support employment training initiatives, particularly for systemically marginalized populations.

Due to limited resources, we were unable to translate the entire Compendium and Toolkit; an abridged version of both products will be available in French.

### Phase Three National Collaborators

The ten Collaborator Associations were:

1. **YWCA Halifax**, Nova Scotia
2. **YWCA Hamilton**, Ontario
3. **YWCA Metro Vancouver**, British Columbia
4. **YWCA Moncton**, New Brunswick
5. **YWCA Montreal/Y des femmes de Montréal**, Quebec
6. **YWCA Muskoka**, Ontario
7. **YWCA Saskatoon**, Saskatchewan
8. **YWCA St. John's**, Newfoundland & Labrador
9. **YWCA Thompson**, Manitoba
10. **YWCA Toronto**, Ontario





## How to Navigate this Toolkit:

**Section 1 – Getting Started** is where to begin to optimize use of this Toolkit as a resource. It explores the Phase Three methodological frameworks integrated into the Collaborator Lesson Plans, focusing on the YWCA BSF asset-based model and tools; the nine essential skills (Skills for Success) and emerging skills for the labour market; and the YWCA Life Skills model and Lesson Plan.

**Section 2 – The Collaborator Lesson Plans** contains the ten plans, each of which refers back to key features of these frameworks. Practitioner Resources for each Lesson Plan can be accessed with the digital version of this Toolkit at [Essential Skills for Employment \(ywcatoronto.org\)](https://www.ywcatoronto.org/essential-skills-for-employment).

**Section 3 – Highlights of Learning from Phase Three of the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures Project** offers a brief overview of the learning explored in more depth in the Compendium.

**Moving Forward – Building Capacity through Knowledge Exchange** concludes the Toolkit.





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# SECTION 1:

## Getting Started

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### Overview

**YWCA Toronto's** interest in developing the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures (BSF) model goes back almost 20 years to 2004, when we first began to research the effectiveness of a holistic asset-based approach to Essential Skills for Employment (ESE) programming with systemically marginalized women at our YWCA Skills Development Centre (SDC). In 2010, we were funded by the Government of Canada's Office of Literacy and Essential Skills (OLES), to pilot a customized version of our approach and model with participants in our East Toronto programs. Both our approach and model drew upon our learning about the holistic Sustainable Livelihoods approach and framework, after participating in a 2004-2009 national research initiative funded by the Canadian Women's Foundation. We first shared our early learning about the **YWCA Toronto** model in a 2010 Compendium of Best Practices in ESE programming and an accompanying curriculum of best practices.

In 2014, encouraged by external interest in the model and to deepen our learning, we launched our first national YWCA Essential Skills for Employment project, later to be branded as the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures project. It focused on building the essential skills and career opportunities of four demographics: Indigenous, immigrant, mature and youth. A further objective was to explore how programs and organizations could find new ways of building their own capacity to sustain and demonstrate the value of their work.

Since the national project was originally titled the **YWCA Essential Skills for Employment (ESE) Project**, we refer to the **YWCA Toronto** staff involved in all phases of the YWCA BSF project as the ESE team.

The nine pan-Canadian Collaborators for Phase Two were:

- **YWCA Agvvik Nunavut**, Nunavut
- **YWCA Halifax**, Nova Scotia
- **YWCA Hamilton**, Ontario
- **YWCA Metro Vancouver**, British Columbia
- **YWCA Moncton**, New Brunswick
- **YM/YWCA of the National Capital Region** (Ottawa)-English/French
- **YWCA Thompson**, Manitoba
- **YWCA Saskatoon**, Saskatchewan
- **YWCA Toronto**, Ontario

Our Collaborators drew on the **YWCA Toronto's** emerging asset-based employment and training model to create their own regionally adapted program models for their diverse demographic groups. A range of pilot programs were involved, from general foundational essential skills-building programs to specific trades and entrepreneurship programs, to a program for Indigenous women to train in traditional sewing skills, to a program preparing women for employment in the administrative and business sectors. Eight of these programs were offered in English, and one in both official languages. Altogether, the project involved over 550 individuals (80 percent self-identified as women); the nine Collaborator Associations; and over 50 employer and community partners.

## Getting Started

Through the Phase Two research, we were able to refine the asset-based model and related asset mapping tools at both individual participant and program/organizational levels; and we developed an Employer Engagement model from our existing **YWCA Toronto** network of employer partners. We also started to identify a set of emerging 21st century skills—some of them often termed “soft skills”—becoming increasingly important to the labour market, in combination with the nine OLES essential skills. Our 2019 YWCA Building Sustainable Futures Compendium and Toolkit share key learning and promising practices from this phase (see Bibliography for links to these publications).

Some themes that emerged from Phase Two helped guide our research for Phase Three:

- A strengthened focus on building foundational life skills at the early pre-employment stage of ESE programming might prove especially effective in supporting systemically marginalized participants to engage in the labour market and advance toward sustainable futures.
- Programs might aim to offer more integrated pathways for continuous upgrading and learning, to meet the evolving labour market: from the nine OLES essential skills to a set of emerging experiential and digital skills necessary to succeed in today’s workforce.
- Collaborative cross-sectoral partnerships and knowledge exchange could be key to promoting the continued importance of gender-focused and foundational essential skills programming, especially with participants who may take longer to make their first steps toward employment.
- This project could contribute toward an evidence-based case for consistent longer-term investment, in order to sustain ESE programming for systemically marginalized communities, and to build program/organizational capacity in the field.

Moving into Phase Three, we broadened the frameworks integrated into the various Collaborator programs, adding to the YWCA BSF model and asset-based tools and essential skills for employment drawn by Collaborators in Phase Two. New to this phase

was integration of the Life Skills model and Coaching training, and a focus on emerging labour market skills and more formalized employer engagement strategies. We wanted to confirm our own past experience at **YWCA Toronto**: that Life Skills’ experiential approach to adult education could be a great model for working with participants to build these emerging skills, many of which are experience-related. We also sought to explore strategies to build knowledge exchange nationally through a virtual learning community.

### YWCA BSF Research Focus for Phase Three

In Phase Three, we aimed to deepen our learning about effective ESE practices with women—especially Indigenous, immigrant, mature and youth—across Canada, by documenting the further integration into Collaborator pilot programs and curricula of the following key frameworks:

- the YWCA BSF asset-based model and related asset mapping tools
- the nine OLES Essential Skills (subsequently revised as “Skills for Success”)

New to Phase Three was the integration of:

- the emerging labour market skills areas identified in our Phase Two research;
- the YWCA Life Skills model and Coaching training; and
- the YWCA BSF Employer Engagement model incubated through Phase Two.

Also new to Phase Three was the shift to digital for our YWCA BSF Learning Community. Both the YWCA BSF Employer Engagement model and virtual Learning Community are explored in the Compendium, which contains more detail about the project research process, outcomes, and learning from Phase Three.



For the Lesson Plans shared in this Toolkit, Collaborators drew on three of these key YWCA BSF frameworks, explored below, to create and/or enhance workshops delivered to participants as part of the curricula for their pilot programs.

## 1.1 THE YWCA BUILDING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES MODEL AND ASSET MAPPING TOOLS

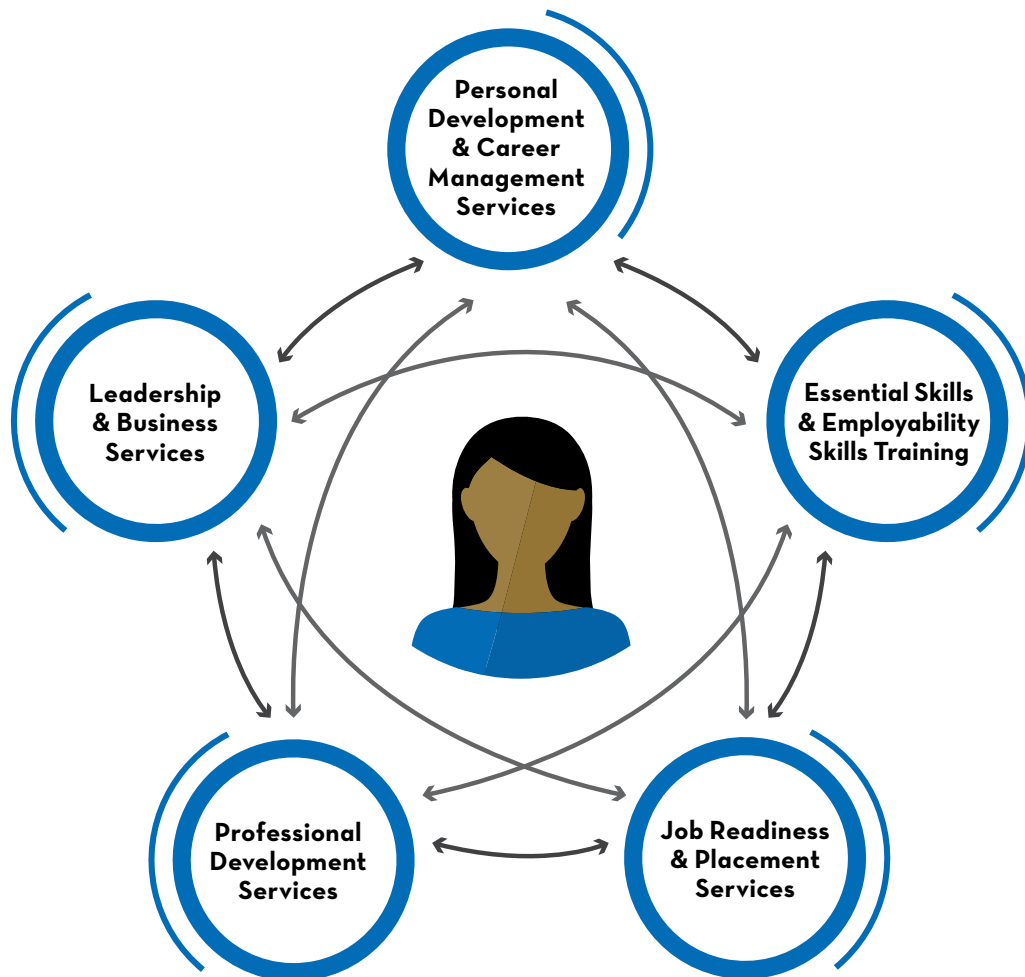
The holistic YWCA BSF program model meets clients flexibly at whatever stage they may be on their movement toward their employment and livelihood goals. It supports them to build upon existing strengths, develop new skills, and create their own individual pathways to success. It nurtures self-empowerment and personal growth, and also integrates foundation-building skills training and lifelong learning opportunities throughout its programs and services.

### What are “Assets”?

Assets are the building blocks for a future—those we already have and want to build on, and those we may need to strategize to gain. They are vital to moving us forward with our livelihood goals. Instead of beginning with “What don’t I have?” an asset-based approach asks, “What assets do I have, and how can I strengthen them?”

When an individual first comes to any of **YWCA Toronto’s** employment training programs, staff work with them to explore the complete picture of their strengths or “assets,” and to identify potential areas for improvement using the YWCA BSF asset mapping tools (see below).

Figure 1: The YWCA Building Sustainable Futures (BSF) Model and its Five Components



### Personal Development & Career Management Services

A range of self-discovery, career development and self-assessment services, including one-to-one and group-based, for those seeking work or to support those focusing on their career goals

### Essential Skills & Employability Skills Training

A wide range of instructor-led and online learning modules, from basic to advanced training and continuing education opportunities, to promote employment success

### Job Readiness & Placement Services

A menu of job readiness and placement services, including one-to-one and group-based, that offers job coaching and mentoring support

### Professional Development Services

A menu of life skills training, customized training and resources for those interested to develop their leadership, professional coaching and/or facilitation skills

### Leadership & Business Services

A variety of specialized services and solutions that can be customized to support individuals, entrepreneurs, businesses and communities in their leadership and business goals

The model also takes a holistic approach to the actual process of building skills. It integrates Essential Skills for Employment into all aspects of the model—from a participant's first meeting with us to examine their strengths, to mapping career and life goals and discovering what they may need to achieve them. As shared in the 2019 YWCA BSF Compendium, our research has shown that the model can be adapted to respond to the training needs, preferences and goals of a diverse range of groups.

The model's flexible continuum of five components offers a full range of options for socio-economic advancement: from one-day needs assessments to foundational skills training, job skills and business training, all the way to leadership training and links to professional networks. It also integrates employer and community connections into each component in order to build strong, proactive networks of support, opportunities and learning among participants, alumnae, staff, and our employer and community partners. Each component can be customized according to individual needs, interests and goals.

## Drawing on the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach

### Exploring Assets

The YWCA BSF model draws on an adaptation of the Sustainable Livelihoods approach, which identifies a range of asset areas that create a holistic picture of all the capabilities, resources and entitlements that people have developed over time, as well as those they may need to build on, to make the transition forward to stronger livelihoods. Program staff work with participants to explore and create a visual “map” of their assets. Mapping encourages people to think about themselves and their lives in a new, positive light. Participants can become more strategic about building their strengths and dealing with setbacks. They can also identify life changes, both as they move through a program and after they leave to pursue their employment and livelihood goals.

The areas themselves can be flexibly adapted by practitioners to capture the specific asset-building objectives of individuals, organizations and/or communities. The YWCA BSF model explores five areas with individual participants: **Basic Needs, Identity, Skills & Employability, Support & Connections, and Money** (see below, Figure 3).

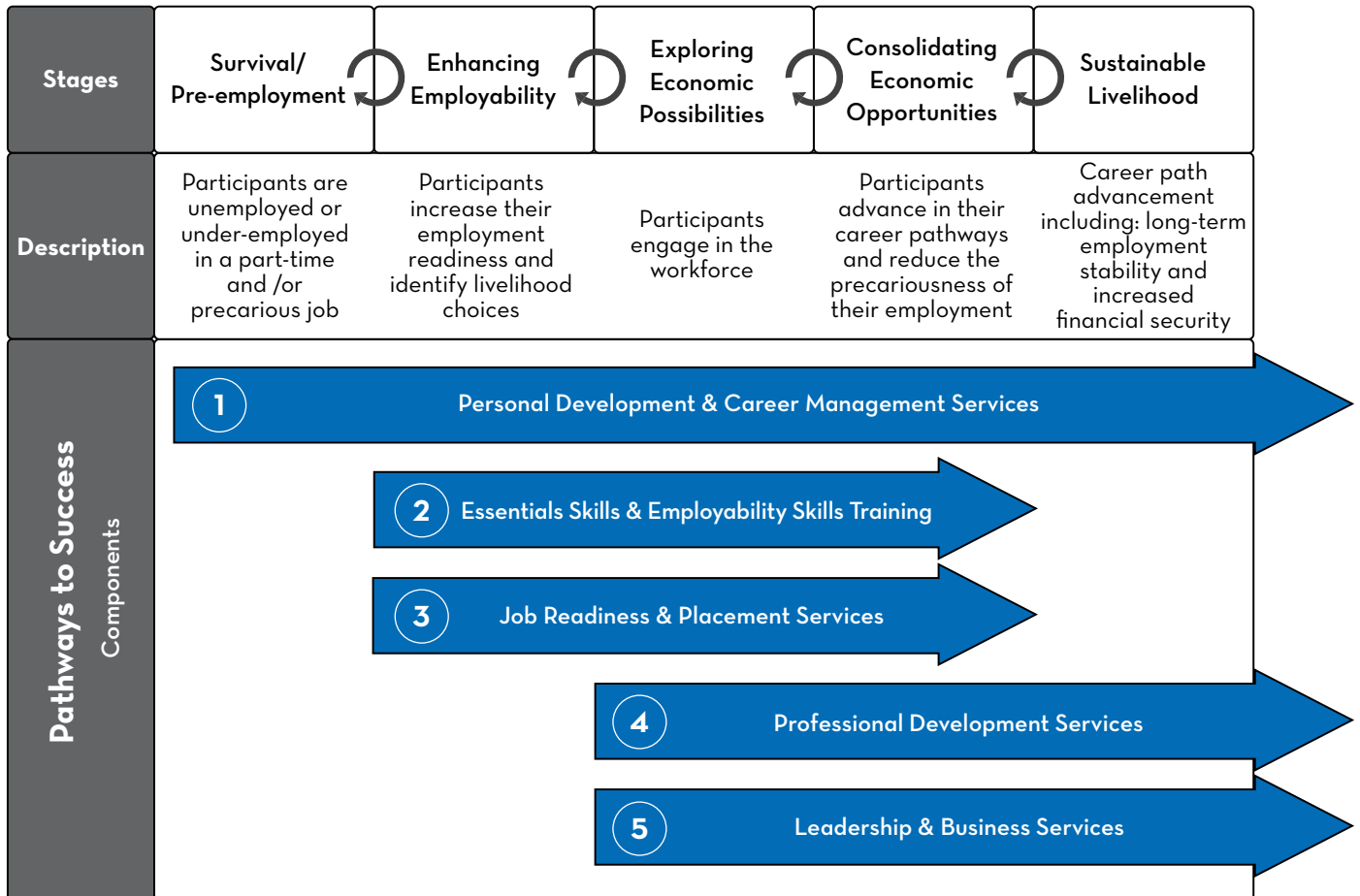
### The Stages of Livelihood Development

Canadian Sustainable Livelihoods research has also identified a framework of the stages that people may go through at different points in their lives: from extreme destabilization; to starting to enhance their employability; to building a base of stability and exploring economic possibilities; to consolidating their economic opportunities; and onward, toward a more sustainable future. With an understanding of these stages, practitioners can work more strategically to provide the most appropriate and effective supports at each stage.

Change may be a slow, gradual process for people distant from the labour market, and they can face many setbacks along the way. People's livelihood transition is not linear: their lives can easily be destabilized by factors such as family crisis, job loss, health issues, etc. They may cycle back many times between stages before moving forward, toward their livelihood goals.

The ESE team adapted the stages of livelihood development framework to capture the stages of participant involvement in the five components of the YWCA BSF model, on the pathway toward a sustainable future. The arrows between stages in the diagram reflect the non-linear pattern of many participants' movement through the stages.

**Figure 2: Stages of Livelihood Development Integrating the Five Components of the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures Model**



Adapted with permission of Sustainable Livelihoods Canada

YWCA Collaborators have used the stages of livelihood development framework to reflect on the life/employment situations of their program participants, and to identify pathways and patterns in their movement toward sustainable futures.

### The “Vulnerability Context” and the “Policy and Institutional Context”

The Sustainable Livelihoods approach further recognizes that both the circumstances of people’s lives and larger external factors, termed the “Vulnerability Context,” can affect an individual’s

progress, often in ways beyond their control. Life circumstances can include patterns connected to where people are in their lives: for example, their reproductive choices, family roles, social relationships, etc. They can also include factors such as the effects of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. The “Policy and Institutional Context” refers to larger external factors that can include systemic socio-economic forces such as the institutional and governmental policy context, racism, gender discrimination, and other often intersecting barriers that limit people’s opportunities to move forward.



A Sustainable Livelihoods approach takes these factors into account when exploring and measuring changes in people's lives, acknowledging that while they are in charge of their pathways forward, they also have to operate within a context of larger forces that may not always support them in their goals and can sometimes hijack their progress.

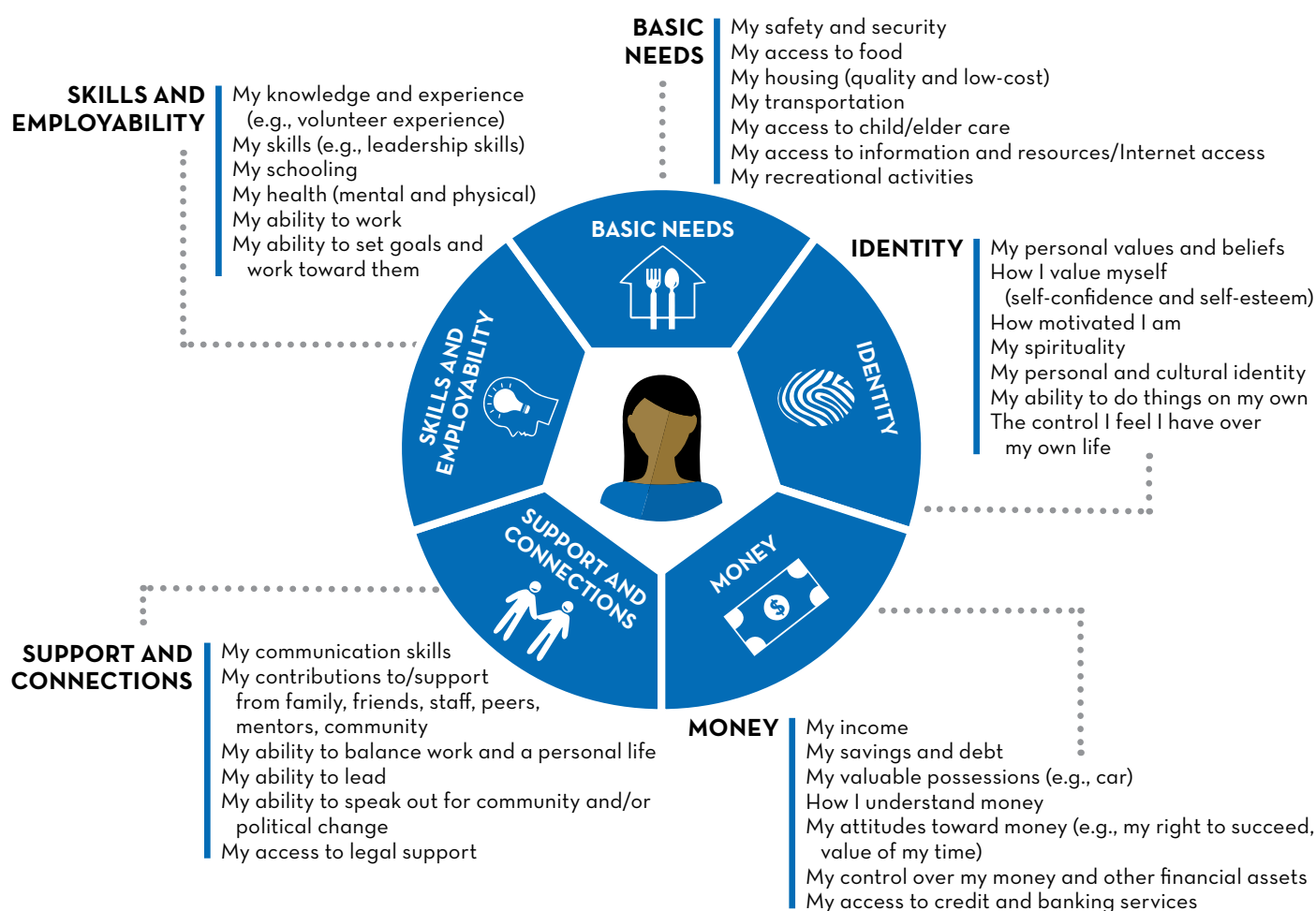
See Bibliography for more resources on the Sustainable Livelihoods approach.

## Mapping Assets at Two Levels

Through Phase Two, the ESE team worked with the YWCA BSF Collaborative to refine asset mapping tools to explore holistic changes in assets at two levels, both of which were also explored in Phase Three:

- **Individual participant:** to capture changes in individual participants' lives as a result of participating in the pilot programs; and
- **Program/organizational capacity:** to capture Collaborators' self-report on changes in their capacity to deliver their programs as a result of participating in the project.

**Figure 3: YWCA Building Sustainable Futures Individual Participant Asset Map**

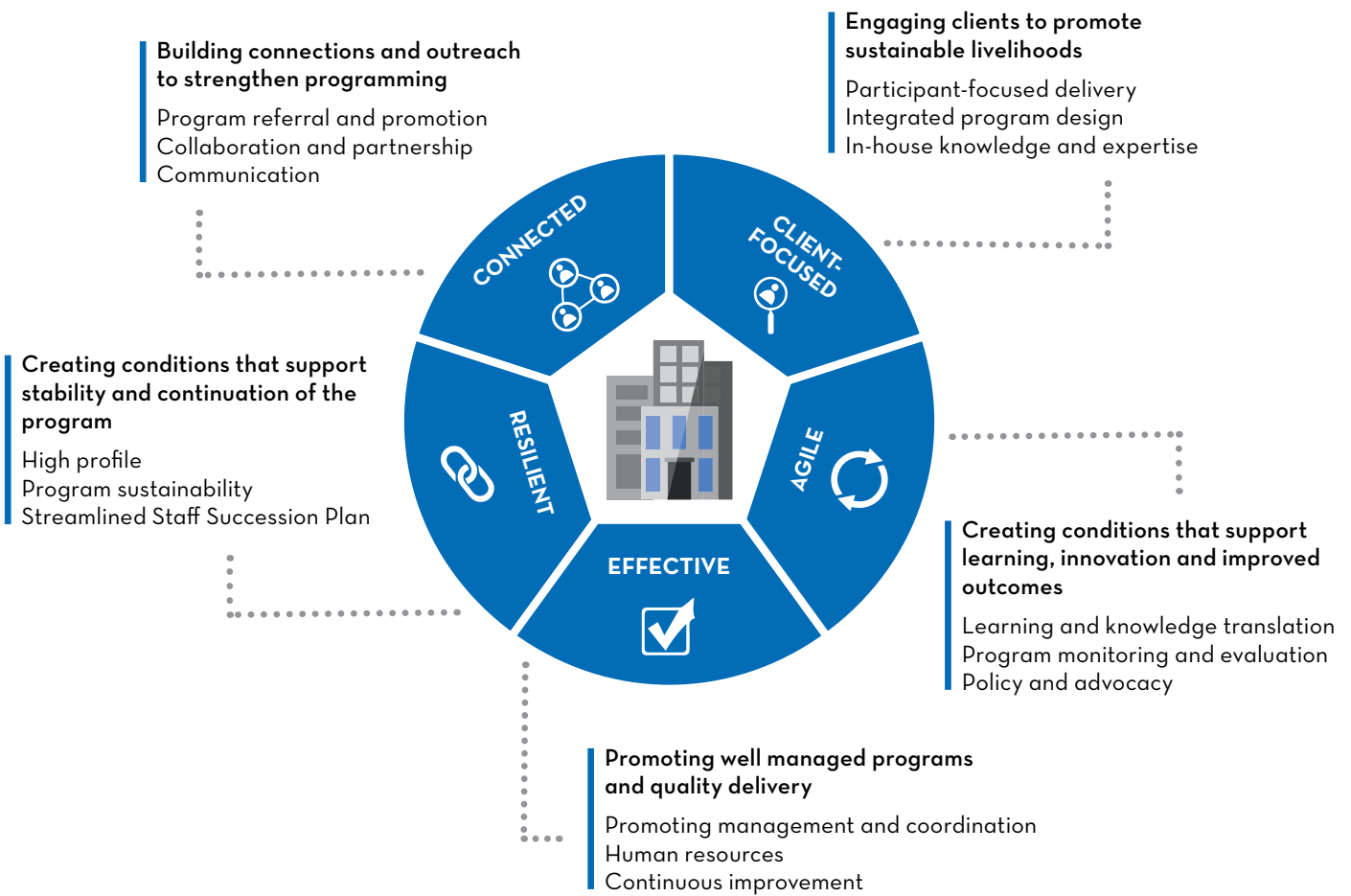


### What is an Asset?

Assets are the building blocks for a future.

Assets can be: What you know, your “lived experience,” your skills and abilities, your learning and training.

Figure 4: YWCA Building Sustainable Futures Program/Organizational Capacity Building Asset Map



### What is an Asset?

Assets are the building blocks for a future.

The five asset areas of the program/organizational asset map are:

- Participant-focused: engaging participants to work toward sustainable futures
- Connected: building connections and outreach to strengthen programming
- Effective: promoting well-managed programs and quality delivery
- Resilient: creating conditions that support stability and the continuation of the program
- Agile: creating conditions that support learning, innovation and improved outcomes

## 1.2 ESSENTIAL SKILLS (SKILLS FOR SUCCESS) AND EMERGING SKILLS FOR THE LABOUR MARKET

### An Essential Skills Focus

In Phases One and Two of this research, the main skills focus was on integration into employment training programs of the nine essential skills identified by the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills (OLES), Government of Canada, represented below by the YWCA BSF icons:



READING



WRITING



DOCUMENT  
USE



NUMERACY



COMPUTER  
USE



THINKING



ORAL  
COMMUNICATION



WORKING  
WITH OTHERS



CONTINUOUS  
LEARNING

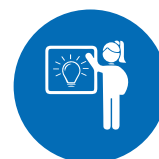
## Emerging Skills for the Labour Market

Phase Two research began to identify a set of emerging essential skills for the labour market. People may be expected to have many of these skills before applying for a job, and to be honing them on a continuous basis. Formerly called soft skills, they have become particularly important to the 21st century global economy. Many leaders in the field of employment development now emphasize that they can be learned, just as people learn vocational skills.

The research highlighted four broad areas of important emerging skills and how the holistic asset-based YWCA BSF model works to build them:



EMOTIONAL  
INTELLIGENCE



ENTREPRENEURIAL  
APPROACH



FLEXIBLE/ADAPTABLE  
DIGITAL SKILLS



MOTIVATION AND  
SELF-DIRECTION

**Emotional Intelligence:** Our approach to emotional intelligence skills building includes valuing listening and learning from diverse perspectives, and from the intersections of experience and identity. The learning process is for everyone—through feedback from the women in our programs, we are continuously learning from them about this vital skill. We also practice engaging in difficult conversations and learning from criticism and setbacks, and we encourage discussion about rights and boundaries, resolving disputes, and managing stress and life balance. We also practice storytelling and analyzing body language.

**An Entrepreneurial Approach:** We encourage participants to take calculated risks in a supportive environment, to embrace new challenges, to think strategically about how to reach their own goals, and to grow resilience for dealing with setbacks. In group trainings and at events with employers and community stakeholders, participants can practice their interpersonal skills for the workplace, discuss problem-solving techniques, build and expand their networks, and hone their self-presentation and time-management skills.

**Flexible/Adaptable Digital Skills:** Through programs and partnerships with education, training and business organizations, we support participants to keep pace with the new technological requirements of the workplace. Partners also provide participants with opportunities to hone their skills through mentorships, job placements, and face-to-face as well as e-learning events.

**Motivation and Self-Direction:** We offer hands-on opportunities for participants to grow and practice these key skills, including: self-confidence, autonomy, problem solving, self-advocacy, action planning, the ability to navigate complex systems and respond to unexpected obstacles; and strong leadership.

We aim to inspire others, and to create and strengthen understanding, mutual respect and empathy. To further these aims, we foster networks among participants, graduates, staff, and our employer and community partners, so that even after graduation participants can avoid becoming isolated and can continue to build on their communities of support.

### Moving Forward to Skills for Success

After the 2019 launch of Phase Three, the nine OLES essential skills were revised into a new model named “Skills for Success” that now includes some of these more experiential skills. Launched in May 2021 by ESDC, the Skills for Success model shares the Life Skills model’s experiential understanding of adult learning: that such skills that can be acquired and enhanced through training, and that we can all hone and practice them.

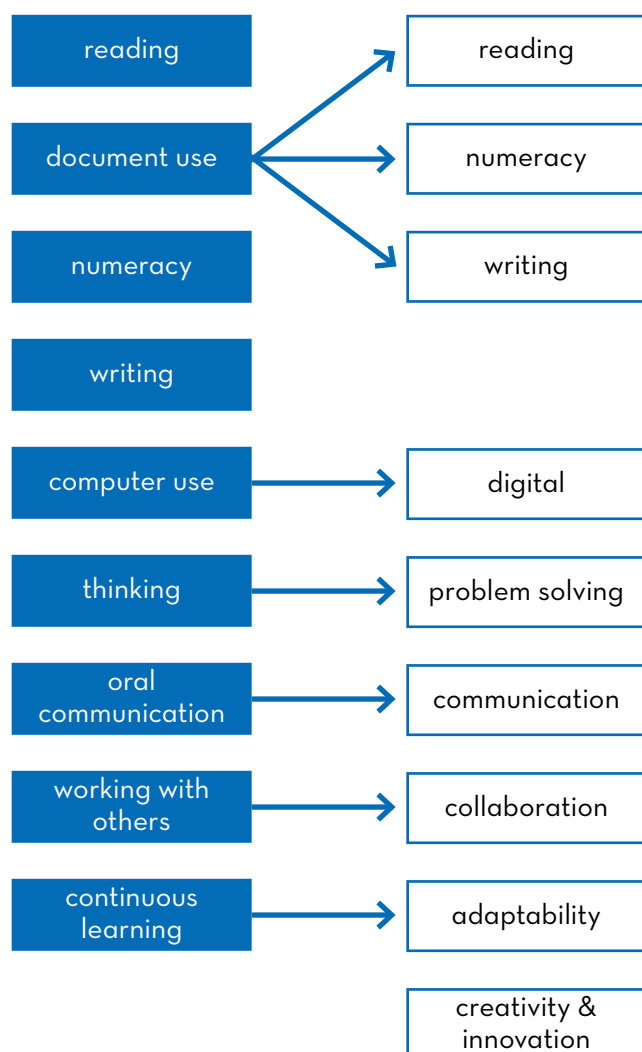
*“The proposed conceptualization [of Skills for Success] involved understanding all skills—especially the soft or social-emotional skills—as repeatable processes or behaviours rather than as personality traits or pre-dispositions, iterating toward a skill-based language that is helpful for curriculum and assessment development...”*

*“Skills for Success are the skills needed to participate and thrive in learning, work and life. Skills for Success include skills that are foundational for building new skills and knowledge and important for effective social interaction. These skills overlap and interact with each other, and with other technical and life skills. They are inclusive and can be adapted to different contexts. Skills for Success are for everyone—employers, workers, training providers, governments, and communities.”* (Social Research and Demonstration Corporation 2022, 7 & 14)

In October 2021, the ESE team hosted an “Introduction to Skills for Success” virtual session for YWCA BSF Collaborator staff. Led by a manager from the Employment Program Policy & Design Directorate (EPPDD), the session was an introduction to the new Skills for Success model, which will be the basis for new essential skills programs funded by the Department of Economic and Social Development Canada, Government of Canada. The ESE team observed how closely these new skill areas dovetailed with our external and internal research findings about emerging skills.

After the presentation, it was agreed by the ESE team and the Project Officer that since we were already halfway through the project, it would not be feasible to introduce the revised skills areas across the national Collaborative within such a short timeframe. Also, research was still ongoing into the design of evaluation tools to measure some of these revised skills. We therefore decided that the Phase Three Collaborators would continue using the originally defined essential skills areas. Phase Three research was already designed to explore effective practices in the four broad emerging skills areas identified by our research in Phase Two.

### From the Nine Essential Skills to Skills for Success



Here is what changed in the move from the Essential Skills framework to the new Skills for Success model.

- Two new skills: **Adaptability**—which integrates **continuous learning**—and **creativity and innovation**
- **Document use** integrated in **reading**, **writing** and **numeracy**
- The scope of computer use is now broader to cover **digital**, which includes the use of different digital devices and platforms
- Oral communication is now **communication** and includes broader concepts, such as non-verbal communication
- Working with others is now **collaboration** to reflect a broader scope, which contains inclusivity and respect for diversity
- Thinking skills, which includes critical thinking and decision-making, is now **problem solving**

(Employment and Social Development Canada 2021)

See resources in Bibliography for more detail on all of these skills.

## 1.3 THE YWCA LIFE SKILLS MODEL AND LESSON PLAN

Life Skills is a model that takes a problem-centred, experience-based, developmentally structured approach to adult learning. It actively encourages the expression of feelings, and acknowledges that there is a subjective quality to knowledge that legitimizes each individual's past experience. The goal is to increase learners' perceptive powers, their understanding of

others, and their understanding of the impact of their behaviour on others. Learning is demonstrated by a change in behaviour.

Also fundamental to Life Skills is the idea that by breaking down a problem situation into "bite-size" pieces, learners can identify the skills in which they have competence and the skills that could be enhanced in order to solve a given situation better.

## Getting Started

This idea, which informs the structure of the Life Skills Lesson Plan, dovetails with the YWCA BSF asset-based approach to the process of self-exploration and mapping changes in assets.

***“So many participants come with very low self-esteem and self-worth and have not been guided to look into this area of ‘Self’ and ask what am I good at, what have I learned, what did I do to get here, what are those skills?”*** (Life Skills Coach Trainer–YWCA BSF Phase Three)

**YWCA Toronto** was first introduced to the Life Skills model in 1973, and has since become a national training centre for Life Skills coaches and a publisher of Life Skills resources. In 1976, we produced the first in our now nine-volume series of *Discovering Life Skills* manuals, all of which include lessons developed and field-tested by **YWCA Toronto** Life Skills coaches in their community groups. In 2023, **YWCA Toronto** celebrated 50 years of delivering Life Skills Coaching trainings to community leaders, coaches, facilitators and other interested parties across Canada.

### Life Skills: A Backgrounder

The Life Skills model emerged in the 1960s in New York, and was drawn upon at the same time in Canada as part of an anti-poverty strategy to promote skills building with systemically marginalized adult populations through the Canada NewStart Program. Of the new approaches and program models introduced nationally by this initiative, only one program continued, in Saskatchewan. Focused primarily on Indigenous learners, Life Skills was administered and delivered by the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT). This model was the basis for **YWCA Toronto’s** approach:

***“[YWCA Toronto’s] Life Skills Coach Certificate training programs are rooted in the principles and philosophy of the Saskatchewan NewStart model of adult education and utilize the lesson plan as a template for designing experiential workshops that engage learners cognitively, physically and effectively.”*** (Life Skills Coach Certificate Phase 1: Foundation of Life Skills Coaching 2023)

Life Skills is grounded in the assumption that adult learning (andragogy) is fundamentally different from childhood learning (pedagogy). Andragogy involves: self-direction; recognizing life experience as a resource; considering what people are ready to learn when they experience the need to manage real-life issues in a more satisfying way; and situations in which learners want to be able to apply whatever knowledge and skills they may gain, in order to function more effectively in the future. Life skills can be applied in all areas of life: self, family, leisure, community and job.

Learning is defined as having two meanings: the acquisition of knowledge, and change in behaviour. It comes about through a dynamic interaction of three domains:

- Cognitive, or Thinking—the understanding and theoretical knowledge that a learner acquires
- Affective, or Feeling—the understanding and integration of feelings in the learning process
- Psychomotor, or Acting—the behavioural manifestation of the learning

The NewStart model added a fourth domain that was found to be particularly relevant to Indigenous learning styles: that of Watching, or learning visually through observation of someone else’s actions. Among other adaptations, it also added a Warm-Up component to the Life Skills Lesson Plan.



Key to the Life Skills model is the concept of Balanced Self-Determined Behaviour (BSD), defined as behaviour that “enables people to act in their own best interest, to stand up for themselves without undue anxiety, to exercise their rights without denying the rights of others.” (*The New Dynamics of Life Skills Coaching*, p. 39). The focus of Life Skills training and coaching is to support people to build their senses of self-esteem and self-worth; to start to realize that they have a broader range of choices about their behaviour in given situations, and in the decisions that they make for themselves; and to identify and act on their choices and decisions while respecting others as self-determining individuals.

***“Many individuals come with a very small toolkit of responses to situations. Learned negative responses are the ways they have coped and might not have been the best, but we honour the fact that these ways got them there, and that they are here. What we are doing is adding more ways that they could look at responding, or alternatives to situations in life.”***  
(Life Skills Coach Trainer)

Life Skills are “problem-solving behaviours appropriately and responsibly used in the management of personal affairs.” The Life Skills model is “a multi-dimensional learning system that facilitates the life-long acquisition of generic skills (personal management, problem-solving, communication and critical thinking) which enable people to function effectively in their personal and professional lives.” (Ibid., pp. 15 & 59). The model can be drawn upon flexibly to apply to individuals of any gender, age, culture, etc., and at any stage of life. Part of the learning is that generic skills learned or built upon in the four areas identified above can be transferrable to other situations in their lives.

Life Skills coaches address these areas by drawing on past experience; creating opportunities for participants to assess their own needs; nurturing self-direction; designing programs around real-life applications; and organizing learning opportunities outside the group class, for people to put the knowledge and skills they have learned toward practical applications.

***“Whether moving into employment or moving into post-secondary education, it’s about making sure they have the skills to be able to be successful—looking at critical thinking skills, doing lessons where they have the ability to stop and analyze, and evaluate situations before responding, and then also having those tools to be able to problem-solve on a daily basis.”*** (Life Skills Coach Trainer)

Learning is group-based, since part of the process is for students to interact with others on their learning journey, as a part of putting into practice their life skills. Another, related focus of Life Skills is to move the individual from a “me mentality” to a “we mentality” and to a feeling of belonging.

### The Life Skills Lesson Plan Components

The focus of Life Skills lessons is to develop participants’ self-assessment, reflective and analytical skills. The approach is democratic: each lesson should pertain to the identified needs of the group. The coach must also have a clear and open rationale for the lesson, to share with the group at the beginning of each session. The lesson begins with the coach introducing the problem, topic or skill. **Goals** for the lesson should be behavioural and achievable.

## Getting Started

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There are slight variations in Life Skills lesson plan formats; **YWCA Toronto** draws on the NewStart model, which adds a **Warm-Up** as an extra step before **Stimulus**. For the **Stimulus** component, a range of visual and auditory media can be used to stimulate feelings and thoughts in participants during the **Warm-Up**. **Evocation** follows, during which the coach will invite participants to share their reactions to the stimulus and then their subjective thoughts.

**Objective Enquiry** forms the cognitive part of the lesson in which coach and participants share outside/external information and identify possible solutions. As they consider this information, the group is being asked to move from their subjective responses to a broader or more objective approach to the topic at hand, which is then viewed in a larger context, both within and outside the group's experience. In **Skills Practice**, the coach provides an opportunity—often through a structured exercise or roleplay—for participants to practice their skill(s). The group is encouraged to give feedback on and process their experience. All of these aspects support the integration and assimilation of learning.

In **Skills Application**, participants try out the skill(s) in a real-life situation. They may set goals for themselves regarding changes they would like to make in their lives. A vital part of the lesson is for them to understand the skills(s) as being transferable.

Finally, in **Evaluation**, participants and the coach evaluate their experiences of the lesson. The group will be asked to identify their personal learning, with support to enhance their increased self-awareness. Participants will also evaluate whether the lesson goals set out at the beginning of the lesson have been achieved.

At the end, the course is a success “if learners demonstrate both the ability to practise the skills in group, use the skills in their personal lives and teach these skills to others in their life situation. This method of skills acquisition abbreviated as **PUT** (Practise; Use; Teach) is the measure by which Life Skills integration can be evaluated as being successful.” Through group feedback, they further refine their responses to the content and can apply an increasing array of problem-solving skills to the situations presented (Ibid., p. 68).

### The Life Skills Lesson Plan Format and Components

The focus of Life Skills lessons is to develop participants' self-assessment, reflective and analytical skills. The approach is democratic: each lesson should pertain to the identified needs of the group, and the coach must also have a clear and open rationale for the lesson to share with the group at the beginning of the session.

## Lesson Plan Format

Adapted for the YWCA BSF Toolkit from **YWCA Toronto's** Life Skills Coach Certificate Program:  
NewStart Life Skills model

Lesson Component	Purpose	Coaching Methods
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>States what the lesson will accomplish</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Name the behaviour participants will be practising, using action words</li> </ul>
Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>States the reason for the lesson</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask: Why take up this lesson/topic?</li> </ul>
Warm Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sets a mood and a focus on here and now</li> <li>Builds cohesion and energizes group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Depending on group and delivery format: games, sociograms, free association, art, posting on Whiteboard, etc.</li> </ul>
Stimulus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Causes/quicken: action, feelings, behaviours, or memories</li> <li>Introduces the topic subjectively through activities/exercises that bring the participant to feel/respond/remember something of a personal nature</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recall an experience/feeling</li> <li>Respond to: a story, role-play, media clip or exercise</li> </ul>
Evocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The action/process of calling something forth</li> <li>Provides participants the opportunity to identify and share reactions, feelings and thoughts experienced in the <b>Stimulus</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask questions that evoke feelings/memories/observations</li> <li>Help identify behaviours and feelings</li> <li>Have the group share ideas/insights and find common themes</li> </ul>
Objective Enquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An investigation/analysis not influenced by personal bias (i.e., neutral, factual, abstract)</li> <li>Involves some generalized teaching re. lesson topic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present generalizations and frameworks</li> <li>Discuss theories</li> <li>Demonstrate tools and activities</li> </ul>
Skill Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows participants to practice the techniques, behaviours and skills taught in <b>Objective Enquiry</b></li> <li>These simulated activities are designed to support the understanding that skills are transferable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use: role-playing, games, brainstorming, case studies</li> <li>Debrief afterwards as a group and discuss</li> </ul>
Skill Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invites participant to use/plan to use the skills learned in <b>Skill Practice</b> in the context of their life, outside the group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support participants to: assess their strengths and needs, and what they would like to change/improve; implement goal setting and action planning</li> </ul>
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offers participants the opportunity to review what they learned from the content and/or process of the lesson, focusing on their own learning experience</li> <li>Themes may relate to: achieving the lesson <b>Goals</b>, value of content, methodologies used, group interaction/dynamics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can use: written forms, art, rating, ranking, verbal sharing, etc.</li> </ul>

For resources on the Life Skills model, see Bibliography.

## Getting Started

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In the context of the pandemic, the **YWCA Toronto** Life Skills Coach Trainer had the new experience of delivering coaching trainings virtually rather than in person, which proved challenging but has been a great success. An added benefit has been the flexibility to reach out to a broader number of people, without losing the benefits of being together physically as a group. For more detail on this experience and about the Life Skills model, see the Phase Three Compendium, Section 3.



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# SECTION 2:

## The Collaborator Lesson Plans

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### Overview

For Phase Three, the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures (BSF) project broadened its national reach, now spanning ten Collaborator Associations from British Columbia to Newfoundland & Labrador. As in Phase Two, pilot program participants from the project demographic represented a diverse range of backgrounds, essential and other skills levels, livelihood stages, and career and life goals. Programs were as diverse, drawing on a wide variety of regional contexts—from large metropolitan areas such as Metro Vancouver, Montreal, and Toronto; to growing cities such as Halifax, Hamilton, Moncton and Saskatoon; to smaller or more rural/remote locations such as Muskoka, St. John's and Thompson.

All of our Collaborators expressed strong interest in being part of the national research, to benefit from training in and implementing the key project frameworks, and to share their experiences and learning with each other. Of the three Associations new to Phase Three, **YWCA Montreal/Y des femmes de Montréal** and **YWCA Muskoka** had previous experience in Essential Skills for Employment (ESE) programming, while **YWCA St. John's** was new to this specialization but had previously worked with participants on self-employment development. For details on Collaborators' previous experience in ESE programming, see the Phase Three Compendium, Appendix 1.

### Why We Joined the National Collaborative

#### YWCA Halifax

*"We wanted to learn more about integrated essential skills delivery and a strength-based approach to programming in order to enhance our program delivery."*

#### YWCA Hamilton

*"We wanted to continue participating in this collaborative research initiative to promote safe, inclusive and equitable communities; to build capacity to provide information, resources and support to 'like-minded' organizations in a variety of communities; and to enhance services and supports within our community."*

#### YWCA Metro Vancouver

*"We saw from Phase Two how we could contribute our internal learning and input from our clients to add insight to Phase Three research into what best supports clients in their career search journeys. We could also benefit from this ongoing opportunity to raise the standard of our program delivery, through incorporating best practices and learning from across the country."*

#### YWCA Moncton

*"Women face a multitude of roadblocks when it comes to entering or re-entering the workforce. Being a part of a nation-wide initiative helps to ensure our Association is providing programming that is accessible to all women, and is supported through the project's methodology training to target a range of different learning styles."*



## The Collaborator Lesson Plans

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### YWCA Montreal/Y des femmes de Montréal

*“Our reason behind joining the BSF initiative was to break away from traditional job search methods. For some time, our programs were focused on techniques for finding work, without touching on personal growth.”*

### YWCA Muskoka

*“We joined the YWCA BSF initiative to support women in building confidence, and to strengthen their skills in order to attain work and financial resiliency, and personal well-being in challenging circumstances.”*

### YWCA Saskatoon

*“Having been part of Phase Two, we saw the national collaborative as a great opportunity to enhance our employment training programs and build our organizational capacity to support our clients holistically with their needs and goals.”*

### YWCA St. John's

*“Collaboration has always been so important to our small agency - so many great things can happen when we collaborate with others to ensure we are approaching programs and services with as much insight as possible. While every community is unique, there are always similar issues being encountered in other communities.”*

### YWCA Thompson

*“The BSF project fits in with our holistic approach and with the life skills and pre-employment training programs and services that we have been providing to our community since 2006. We were among the Associations involved in the Phase Two collaborative research for this initiative, and were pleased to come on board as part of Phase Three.”*

### YWCA Toronto

*“Phase Two of the BSF initiative was an incredible opportunity for us to learn from fellow staff and colleagues from YWCA's across Canada. We wanted to extend this collaborative to a Phase Three and continue to build individual, program and organizational capacity by delivering regional and national trainings. We were happy to have seven past and three new Associations sign on to the initiative in 2019.”*

All ten YWCA BSF Collaborators were asked to contribute a Lesson Plan from one of their program workshops and accompanying practitioner resources to this Toolkit using the YWCA Life Skills model and Lesson Plan format, and with a focus on one or more of the emerging skills for the labour market identified in the Phase Two research and described above in Section 1. Some of these Lesson Plans were newly designed for the project, such as **YWCA Thompson's** fun approach to enhancing critical thinking skills, while others were already being offered by programs and were adapted and refined through Phase Three.

With the advent of COVID-19 and resulting restrictions, all Collaborators had to shift to online delivery of their programs, but many have since moved to hybrid delivery or returned to in-person delivery, depending on the needs and preferences of their participant groups. For these Lesson Plans, some exercises were found to work better in person than online. In particular, the Warm Up exercises used at the start of the Lesson to introduce everyone to each other and create a positive group atmosphere for the rest of the session required fine-tuning for online delivery. Some ideas for adaptation are suggested in the Practitioner Notes of the Plans themselves.

Included before each Collaborator Lesson Plan is a brief profile of their Association and of their Phase Three pilot program. These profiles capture the programs as they were offered during the research period. As noted earlier, the focus of Phase Three originally specified women, as is reflected in some of the language used in the profiles. Many programs broadened their demographic during the course of this phase to include gender diverse individuals. See the Phase Three Compendium for more detail on each Collaborator Association and their pilot program, and for a sampling of promising practices from all ten Collaborator programs.



### AT-A-GLANCE LESSON PLANS

#### YWCA Halifax, Nova Scotia

**Job Searching in the Digital Age** – explores the ever-changing practice of effective job searching. It shows participants how to boost their success not only by increasing their volume of applications but also by conducting informed, labour market research that complements their individual employment skills and values. The workshop focuses on strategies for identifying complementary job postings and offers insight into resources available for job searching, and how to job search safely. It can be delivered virtually and/or in person.

#### YWCA Hamilton, Ontario

**Building Your Business on Core Values** – provides an in-depth look into how crucial values are when making important decisions relating to a business. Intended for small business owners, it is delivered in person or as a webinar on the first day of our small business training program. We start by delving into the values that we relate to personally, and then we organize them in clusters and write a value statement that will help us make decisions for our business based on these values.

#### YWCA Metro Vancouver, British Columbia

**Self-Esteem** – aims to develop self-awareness and self-efficacy, both to build the power of a person to face challenges competently and help inform the choices they are likely to make. By increasing their awareness of skill sets and strengths, and their ability to communicate these effectively, participants will be better positioned to succeed in employment opportunities in a competitive job market. The workshop is designed to be delivered virtually by Zoom.

#### YWCA Moncton, New Brunswick

**Lived Experience as Transferable Skills** – explores how our everyday roles, responsibilities, tasks and actions can be skills transferable for employment. It is ideal for individuals who have been precariously employed, underemployed, and/or unemployed and are seeking to return to work, as a first step to identifying the many skills and talents they already possess. They can move forward with added confidence to promote themselves in starting a business or re-entering the workforce while navigating barriers that women and gender diverse individuals can often face. The workshop can be delivered in person or virtually.

#### YWCA Montreal/Y des femmes de Montréal, Quebec-English/French

**Responding to Change** – is designed to support participants to deal with the changes they are experiencing. Often, they have been out of the workforce for some time, and so starting a full-time program can be stressful. The workshop aims to help them find some stability while facing a rapidly changing world. By learning to welcome change, they can feel stronger in themselves and can better understand the impetus to grow in new directions. As with all of our workshops, this one is delivered in person.

#### YWCA Muskoka, Ontario

**Celebrating Anger** – explores why we experience anger, the difference between primary and secondary feelings, and how we can learn from and communicate our anger in both personal and workplace situations. By identifying what is making us angry, we can better express our feelings when the emotion arises. Anyone from a young adult to a senior citizen can benefit from this lesson, which can be delivered in person or via Zoom.

### YWCA Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

**Boundaries = Personal Kindness** – is designed for youth and adults, and explores how setting boundaries enables us to sustain our emotional, physical and mental well-being in relationships, at home and at work. Boundaries allow us to clarify our needs, wants and values in relationship with others. They empower us to put a priority on ourselves, as well as to make choices about how we want to be treated and how we use our time in ways that are right for us. This lesson can be delivered both in person and virtually.

### YWCA St John's, Newfoundland & Labrador

**What Does it Take to be an Entrepreneur?** – is designed for young women and gender diverse youth in a pre-employability/employability skills program who have limited knowledge of entrepreneurship—no previous knowledge is required. The session covers the key steps required to explore the viability of a business idea as well as the general application of entrepreneurial skills being valuable foundational skills for everyday life and employment generally. The lesson can be delivered in person and virtually.

### YWCA Thompson, Manitoba

**Critical Thinking** – takes a fun and imaginative approach to exploring the importance of critical thinking skills in life and in work. The aim is for participants to expand and enhance their thinking skills to detect problems, identify possible solutions, and make informed decisions. Developing critical thinking skills is especially important for individuals who may be feeling “stuck” and afraid to make a major decision, or who tend to be reactive and make hasty decisions. The ability to think critically can also have a significant impact on a person's way of life and career choices, and is therefore a necessary skill as part of a lifelong learning journey. This workshop is delivered in person to the group.

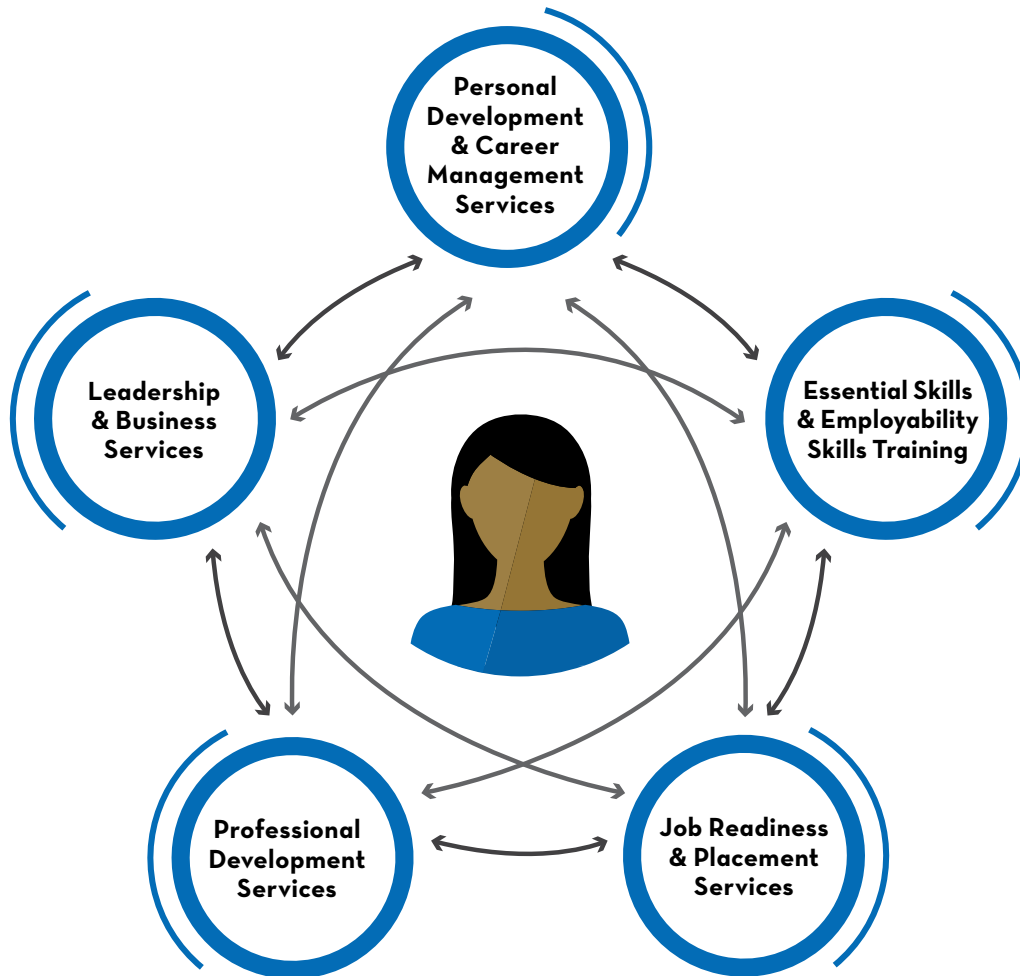
### YWCA Toronto, Ontario

**Building Resiliency** – presents a holistic and strengths-based approach to setting life goals through supporting participants to identify their assets in a range of five areas: Basic Needs; Skills and Employability; Identity; Support and Connections; and Money. Assets form the building blocks for resiliency. The lesson is designed to provide participants with a positive outlook for developing, adapting and reaching their individual life and work goals in an ever-evolving world. It can be delivered in person and/or virtually.

## NAVIGATING THE LESSON PLANS:

As a key for easy access, here again are the thematic diagrams from Section 1 – Getting Started:

### The Five Components of the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures Model



#### **Personal Development & Career Management Services**

A range of self-discovery, career development and self-assessment services, including one-to-one and group-based, for those seeking work or to support those focusing on their career goals

#### **Essential Skills & Employability Skills Training**

A wide range of instructor-led and online learning modules, from basic to advanced training and continuing education opportunities, to promote employment success

#### **Job Readiness & Placement Services**

A menu of job readiness and placement services, including one-to-one and group-based, that offers job coaching and mentoring support

#### **Professional Development Services**

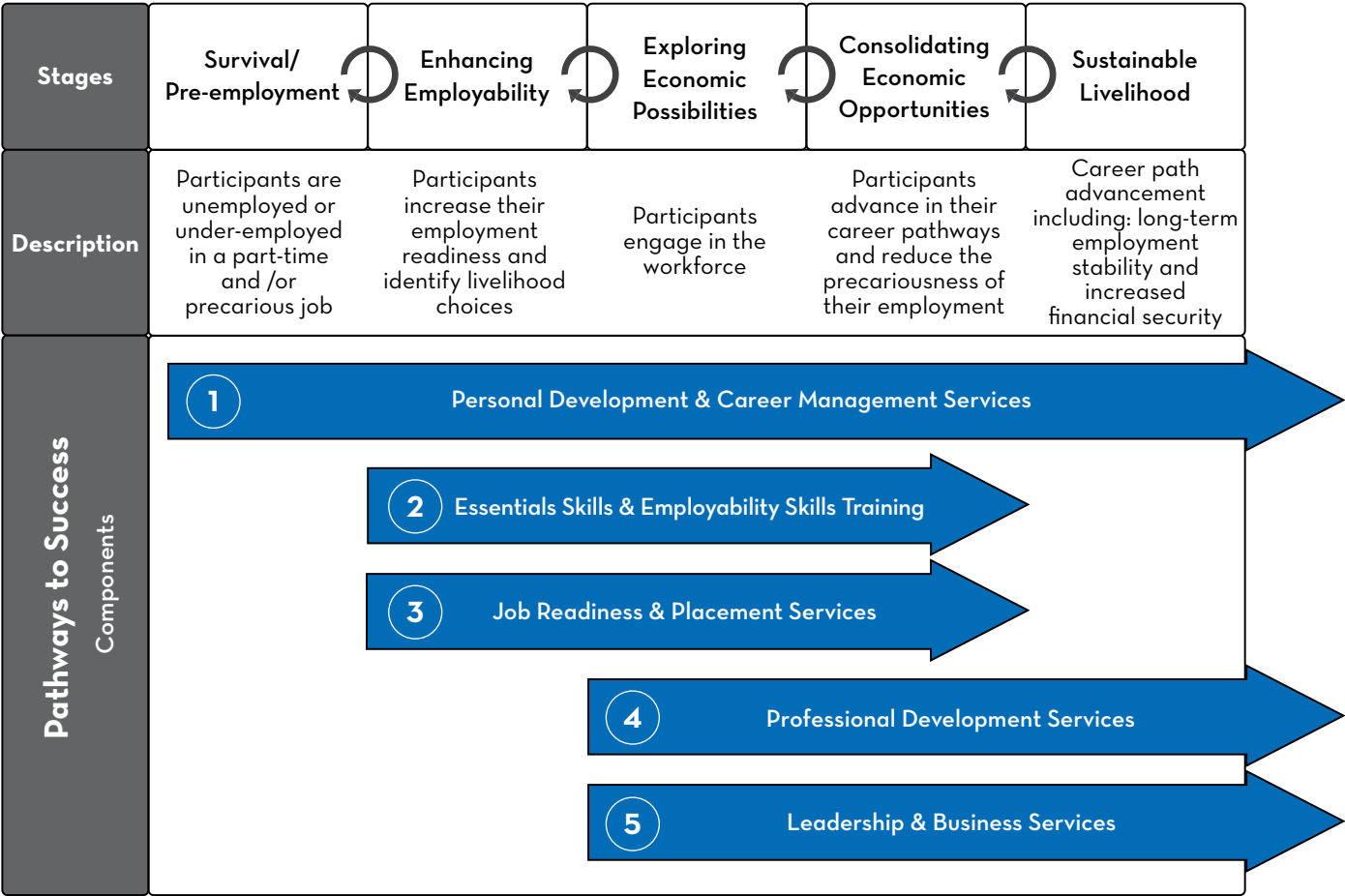
A menu of life skills training, customized training and resources for those interested to develop their leadership, professional coaching and/or facilitation skills

#### **Leadership & Business Services**

A variety of specialized services and solutions that can be customized to support individuals, entrepreneurs, businesses and communities in their leadership and business goals

# The Collaborator Lesson Plans

## The Stages of Livelihood Development Integrating the Five Components of the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures Model



Adapted with permission of Sustainable Livelihoods Canada

### The Nine Essential Skills



READING



WRITING



DOCUMENT  
USE



NUMERACY



COMPUTER  
USE



THINKING



ORAL  
COMMUNICATION



WORKING  
WITH OTHERS



CONTINUOUS  
LEARNING

### Emerging Labour Market Skills



EMOTIONAL  
INTELLIGENCE



ENTREPRENEURIAL  
APPROACH



FLEXIBLE/ADAPTABLE  
DIGITAL SKILLS



MOTIVATION AND  
SELF-DIRECTION

The diagrams on the front pages of each Lesson Plan show:

- which of the five components of the YWCA BSF model were drawn on for the lesson;
- which stage(s) of participant livelihood development may be a good fit with the lesson; and
- which of the nine essential skills and emerging labour market skills are integrated into the lesson.

All program profiles and Lesson Plans were authored by their respective staff and have been edited only for consistency and typographical errors; and for the purposes of brevity, for this Toolkit.

The Lesson Plans have been customized by Collaborators for delivery with their program participants. Those interested to draw on the Plans for their program participants are encouraged to adapt the content and language as appropriate to their specific groups.

Practitioner Resources from each of the Lesson Plans such as Worksheets, PowerPoints, etc. can be accessed with the digital Toolkit at [Essential Skills for Employment \(ywcatoronto.org\)](https://www.ywcatoronto.org/essential-skills-for-employment).





# 2.1 YWCA Halifax, Nova Scotia

## Job Searching in the Digital Age

**Lesson Time:**  
2.5 hours  
(excluding breaks)

This learning module was delivered by YWCA Halifax as part of the curriculum of **LAUNCH Atlantic**, which was the program documented for Phase Three of the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures (BSF) project.

Times have changed. As with many things, the process of job searching has evolved a lot over the last number of years. Just as photography has shifted from film to digital, job searching and development have moved in a more virtual and technologically driven direction. While we must adapt the process of how we search and apply for jobs, we must also re-evaluate what we are searching for, and consider our own personal characteristics and circumstances when choosing the opportunities that we engage with.

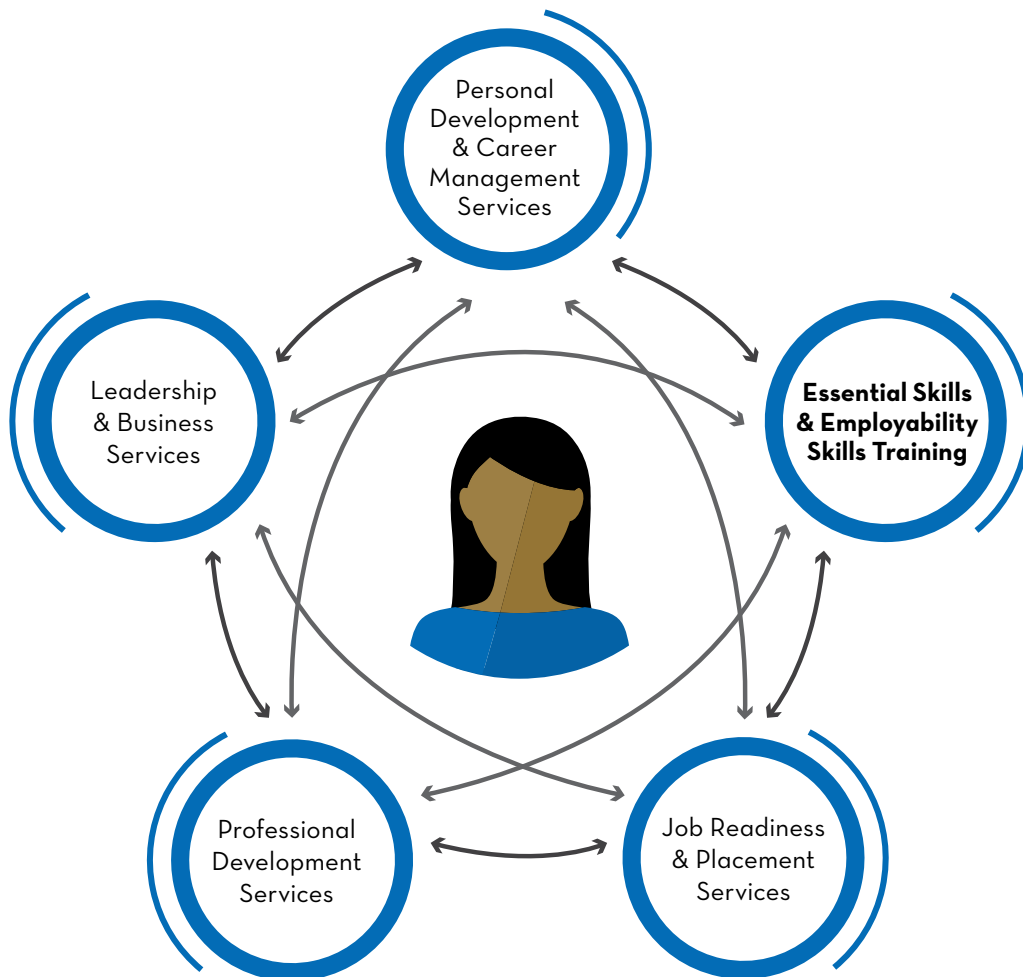
With many job postings and recruitment moving to digital formats, and employers seeking candidates with evidenced soft skills, it is particularly important for youth to be engaged in and proficient at performing effective job-developing techniques. Awareness of the labour market and of how to interpret the data can assist youth in identifying career potential, employment prerequisites, and transferrable skills. Youth also need to consider changing labour patterns and how to adapt their qualifications, skills and career choices in order to make beneficial and informed decisions.

*“Traditionally, job searching meant checking job boards, scouring classified ads, visiting a career center, or tapping personal networks. The digital age has brought a wider reach of job opportunities into view and at a lower cost. Internet-based job searching is now the predominant form of job searching worldwide. Besides job postings, some platforms allow job seekers to post résumés and maintain profiles, build and bolster professional networks, and read professional news and trends. These types of platforms also allow employers to increase the reach of their job postings and gain information on job applicants.”*

(Johnson, Lehoahoa, Shaw, and Urquhart, 2020)

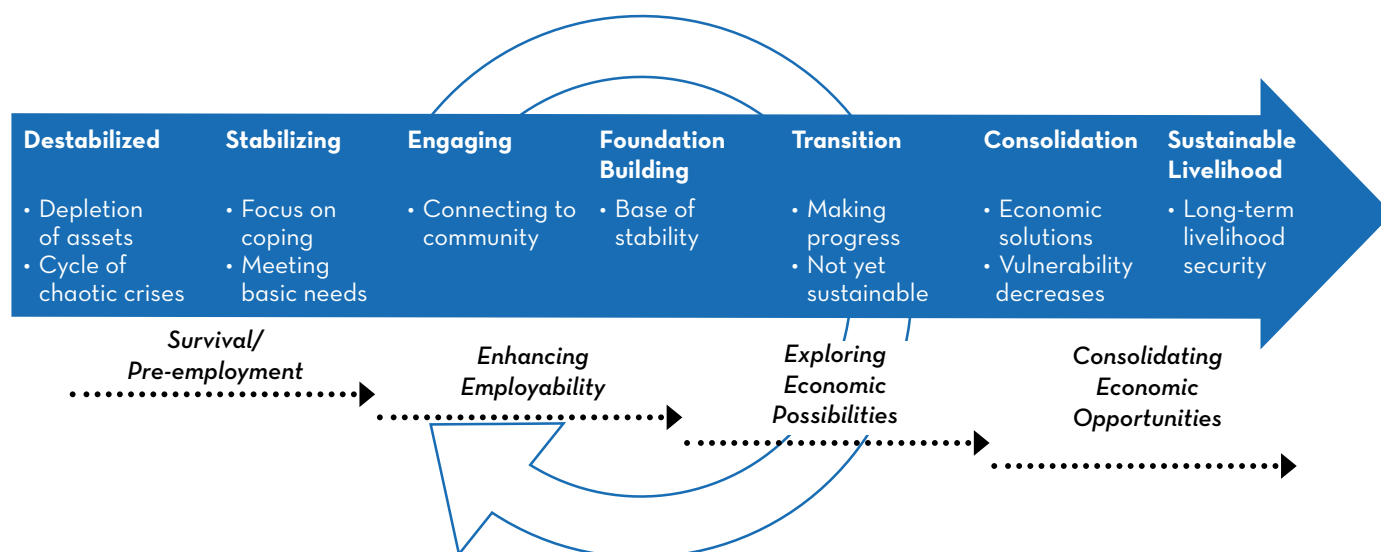


## YWCA BUILDING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES MODEL



This workshop falls within the **Essential Skills & Employability Skills Training** component. It lays out a process for job searching and development that relies upon participants' understanding of their own individual personalities, skills and values. It will explore how to search for complementary opportunities in the current local labour market. It also explores how to job search safely and avoid potential scams.

## STAGES OF LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT



With permission of Sustainable Livelihoods Canada

This job-searching workshop falls under the **Enhancing Employability** stage of livelihood development. It could also be valuable for independent delivery to those in the community who have not been attached to the labour market recently or at all, as well as those who may have been in employment for a long time and require job search upskilling.

## ESSENTIAL SKILLS INTEGRATED INTO THIS LESSON PLAN



READING



WRITING



DOCUMENT  
USE



NUMERACY



COMPUTER  
USE



THINKING



ORAL  
COMMUNICATION

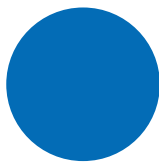


WORKING  
WITH OTHERS



CONTINUOUS  
LEARNING

### EMERGING LABOUR MARKET SKILLS INTEGRATED INTO THIS LESSON PLAN



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE



ENTREPRENEURIAL APPROACH



FLEXIBLE/ADAPTABLE DIGITAL SKILLS



MOTIVATION AND SELF-DIRECTION

### YWCA HALIFAX, LAUNCH ATLANTIC

#### About the Association

YWCA Halifax is Halifax Regional Municipality's only organization that builds economic security, promotes wellness, and creates opportunities for women, girls and their families by providing a strong voice and integrated services. We are for, by and about women and girls. We transform lives by providing a continuum of critical services and programs that build capacity for lasting positive change. We strive to change the underlying causes and issues that are at the root of inequality, violence, poverty and homelessness. Since 2020, we have been part of the **LAUNCH Atlantic** regional partnership (see the Phase Three Compendium, Section 4).

#### Demographic Focus of the Program

**LAUNCH Atlantic** is focused on young women and gender diverse youth within the age bracket of 15-30 who are out of school, unemployed or underemployed, and face multiple barriers to employment.

#### Our Local Context

Our YWCA is centrally located in the community of Spryfield, which has an extremely high percentage of residents living on income assistance, one of the highest rates of single/lone mothers in the country, and a low rate of high school graduates. Employability programming is currently being held at this location, at which space and resources available are accessible to the surrounding communities.

### PROGRAM OUTLINE

#### Purpose

The **LAUNCH Atlantic** program is designed to provide young women and gender diverse youth with hands-on employment skills training.

#### Description

**LAUNCH Atlantic** is a 20-week program that now spans three provinces: **YWCA Halifax**, Nova Scotia; **YWCA Moncton**, New Brunswick; and **YWCA St John's**, Newfoundland & Labrador. The program consists of eight paid weeks of skills development training (delivered virtually) that help participants to recognize personal and professional values, identify character and personality dimensions, and learn strategies for finding employment opportunities. These workshops have been adapted to **YWCA Toronto's** Life Skills model and YWCA BSF's asset mapping approach.

Equipped with greater self-awareness, participants then embark on their paid 12-week work placements with employers across the city. This allows them to gain real world experience and assess work values based on direct experience instead of assumed work expectations. Along with engaging participants in work-specific trainings, **LAUNCH** also offers certifications in valuable work placement areas, and provides funding for participants to engage in work-specific training. Staff have also implemented the YWCA BSF Employer Engagement Framework to ensure a collaborative approach when engaging with employers and participants during the job search process, and for tracking program outcomes.

## LESSON OUTLINE

### Lesson Description

The workshop in this lesson plan explores the ever-changing practice of effective job searching. It shows participants how to boost their success not only by increasing their volume of applications but also by conducting informed labour market research that complements their individual employment skills and values. It focuses on strategies for identifying complementary job postings and offers insight into resources available for job searching. It also explores how to job search safely and avoid potential scams.

Using a combination of PowerPoint presentation, worksheets, facilitator-led conversation and participant feedback, the workshop offers insights into how the job search process has evolved and asks participants to explore their own work values, preferences and needs. This component is followed by an introduction to labour market analysis, and helps participants understand the connection between their values/preferences/needs and the context of job/career demographics (e.g., employment opportunities, availability, wages, required education, etc.). The workshop wraps up with an overview of job search resources and ways to maintain safety and security while using a digital platform for job searching. It can be delivered virtually and/or in-person.

The workshop is well suited for people currently attending the **LAUNCH Atlantic** Program and can be delivered in a half day as it uses previously discussed topics and assessments for reference and application (e.g., résumé, cover letter and interview skills workshops, as well as the noted assessments below). It would also be valuable for independent delivery to those in the community who have not been attached to the labour market recently or at all, as well as those who may have been employed for a long time and now require job search upskilling. In this case, facilitators should allow for a full day of delivery to ensure participants are able to complete the assessments noted in the Stimulus component (outlined below). The workshop would further be of value to those with digital literacy barriers.

### Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this learning module, participants will:

- **Understand** the current job market and job-searching strategies
- **Develop** an understanding of the relation between labour market information (LMI) and their job/career preferences, needs, values and employment barriers
- **Become aware** of job-searching resources
- **Be able to practice** safe job searching, by maintaining digital privacy and avoiding potential job scams

### Participant Prerequisites

**Minimum Prerequisite:** Participants should have an interest in applying for and/or attaining employment in the near future.

**Ideal Prerequisite:** Participants would benefit greatly from having completed the **YWCA Halifax** Employment Skills, Values and Qualities and the Values and Transferable Skills workshops, where they will have determined their employment skills, interests and values prior to beginning this workshop.

### Digital Prerequisite

**Minimum Prerequisite:** Participants should have an introductory understanding of the Internet and how to search for information (using Google, knowing what a website/web address is and how to scroll, etc.)

**Ideal Prerequisite:** Participants would benefit from having strong digital literacy skills that allows them to save/download documents and upload documents to job boards. This will assist them in gaining a better understanding of the actual application process during the job search website review portion of the workshop.

### Required Materials

- Computers/devices (e.g., PCs, laptops, tablets, phones)
- Stationary (pens/pencils)

## Facilitator Resources

- PowerPoint presentation
- I Would Fit Well in the Following Jobs worksheet
- Labour Market Information (LMI) Research worksheet
- Evaluation form

## Total Time

Half a day (2.5 hours) if delivered in conjunction with the **LAUNCH Atlantic** Program or a full day (5 hours) if delivered independently.

## Additional Documents (as required; see below, STIMULUS component)

- Holland Code—completed in previous workshop
- Workplace Values and Transferable Skills package

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Goals	PowerPoint presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the current job market and job-searching strategies</li> <li>• Learn how to do Labour Market Information (LMI) research</li> <li>• Review job board websites</li> <li>• Become aware of job scam warning signs</li> </ul>	<p>5 minutes</p> <p>The facilitator will guide participants through the PowerPoint slides, explain the lesson's goals, and provide space for participant questions throughout workshop delivery.</p>



Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
<b>Rationale</b>	PowerPoint presentation	<p>Times have changed. As with many things, the process of job searching has evolved a lot over the last number of years. Just as photography has shifted from film to digital, job searching and development have moved in a more virtual and technologically driven direction.</p> <p>While we must adapt the process of how we search and apply for jobs, we must also re-evaluate what we are searching for, and consider our own personal characteristics and circumstances when choosing the opportunities that we engage with.</p> <p>This workshop lays out a process for job searching and development that relies upon participants' understanding of their own individual personalities, skills and values. It will also explore how to search for complementary opportunities in the current local labour market.</p>	<p>2-3 minutes</p> <p>See above note.</p>
<b>Warm-up</b>	PowerPoint presentation  Flipchart/ Whiteboard	<p>Brainstorm: This activity is completed as a prompted group discussion. The following questions are illustrated in the PowerPoint. The facilitator will then write answers/ comments from participants on a flipchart or Whiteboard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is something that intimidates or frustrates you about finding work?</li> <li>• What was employment and job searching like when you first looked for work, or when your parents looked for work?</li> <li>• What is work and job searching like today?</li> <li>• Why the change? What do these changes mean for you?</li> </ul>	15-20 minutes

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Stimulus	<p>PowerPoint presentation</p> <p>Documents: Skills Checklist, Workplace Values and Transferable Skills Package</p> <p>Holland Code digital link: <a href="https://www.truity.com/test/holland-code-career-test">https://www.truity.com/test/holland-code-career-test</a>)</p> <p>Computers with Internet access</p>	<p>In most cases, participants will have determined their skills, interests and values in previous workshops.</p> <p>For participants not participating in our <b>LAUNCH Atlantic</b> program or who have not completed the Skills Checklist, Work Values Assessment, and the Holland Code previously, the facilitator will hand out these worksheet resources and ask participants to complete them during the workshop as part of this component.</p> <p>Skills Checklist: This resource is used in conjunction with another workshop but can still be used here. During the workshop, participants will work independently (or with facilitator assistance if requested) to complete this worksheet. The “job-specific skills” assessment in this resource will also be used to complete the Holland Code resource.</p> <p>Work Values Assessment: Participants will complete this worksheet independently (or with facilitator assistance if requested). It covers both employment values and needs, in order to allow participants to explore and evaluate the suitability of employment opportunities.</p> <p>Holland Code: Participants will follow directions from this worksheet and use an online link to access their code, to assist with career decision-making based on personality traits and to connect their interests to job-searching and long-term career goals.</p>	<p>15-20 minutes if participants have previously completed the assessment documents required for the <b>Stimulus</b> component. If so, the facilitator should advise them to use this space to review their assessment data and outcomes, and to familiarize themselves with this feedback.</p> <p>1.5-2 hours if participants have not completed the assessments.</p>

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Evocation	PowerPoint presentation	<p>Once participants have identified their skills/values and what jobs are good for them, the aim will then be to explore the value of making informed decisions about work and workplaces.</p> <p>This process supports participants in making informed employment choices and in articulating their needs/expectations to employers in cover letters and résumés, as well as in interviews, even after they have secured employment. Also explored is the impact of having skills that are mismatched with their employment, and whether participants have discovered new skills or values that they were unaware of previously.</p> <p>During this section, the facilitator will lead a group discussion with participants and encourage participant engagement and insight sharing. This activity will remain informal and will not require participants to write or record.</p> <p>The facilitator will prompt the discussion by verbally asking participants the questions noted below, and can use a flipchart/ Whiteboard to write down questions for participants to see.</p> <p>The facilitator should not record participant responses, as this component should remain informal. Some participants may be reluctant to engage if they have the idea that their answers might be on record, especially because the Evocation requires them to share specific and personal insights (e.g., prompt question #5).</p>	30 minutes

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
(continued)		<p>Prompt questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Why do you think it is important that we make career decisions based on these characteristics and needs?</i></li> <li>2. <i>Is it important to consider workplace dynamics as much as the actual work you do when looking for work? Why or why not?</i></li> <li>3. <i>Drawing on the insights gained from the <b>Stimulus</b> component, how does your personal employment preferences/suitability compare to your previous employment history and/or experience? Were they well-matched, and if not, how did that affect the quality of your employment/experience and your overall well-being?</i></li> <li>4. <i>Were you able to identify a skill or value that you were not previously aware of having?</i></li> <li>5. <i>Is there anything else that you found interesting about this activity that you would like to share?</i></li> </ol>	

Lesson Component	Required Materials/ Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes		
Objective Inquiry	PowerPoint presentation  Computers with Internet access	<p>Labour Market Information (LMI) is about jobs and the people who do those jobs. It includes people who are available for work, training for work, hiring people, or those otherwise involved in training or employment. As with other markets, the “labour market” involves both supply and demand.</p> <table><tr><td>Demand-side LMI: Businesses, organizations and employers need people to work for them in order to run their operations.</td><td>Supply-side LMI: People who work for these employers, or who are training or available to work, supply their skills, talent and labour.</td></tr></table> <p>Which side are you on? You are on the supply side if you are looking for and available to work. Essentially, the higher the demand, the more jobs are available; the higher the supply, the more competition there is (in other words, lots of people looking for work). In the opposite case, the lower the demand, the fewer job openings there are; the lower the supply, the fewer people there are looking for and available to work.</p> <p>For example, if demand is high for Retail Managers, but supply is low—meaning not a lot of people are looking for that job, or there is not a large pool of people experienced and qualified for that job—there will be fewer applicants for each position, and you would be more likely to get the job if you applied.</p> <p>On the other hand, if demand is low for fishermen, but supply is high, then there will be skilled and qualified people left unemployed and much more competition for any such jobs that open up. The latter means that either the most experienced and senior people will be hired first, or people who are less qualified will be hired because they can be paid less.</p>	Demand-side LMI: Businesses, organizations and employers need people to work for them in order to run their operations.	Supply-side LMI: People who work for these employers, or who are training or available to work, supply their skills, talent and labour.	30 minutes
Demand-side LMI: Businesses, organizations and employers need people to work for them in order to run their operations.	Supply-side LMI: People who work for these employers, or who are training or available to work, supply their skills, talent and labour.				

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
(continued)		<p>What can I use LMI for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It can be used to help you make decisions about how to focus or refocus your career;</li> <li>• Information can show you where the jobs are and where they are going to be in the future, as well as what jobs have a positive outlook—meaning that they will be or will continue to be in high demand;</li> <li>• It can help you to identify what kind of training you will need now and in the future—having the right training for a job gives you the competitive edge; and,</li> <li>• It will outline salary ranges for careers that you might be interested in. You can find out roughly what you can expect financially from a given job, which can help you build your financial assets.</li> </ul> <p>Together, the facilitator and participants will explore local labour market and job-posting websites, and how to read metrics. Also covered here will be Job Search Safety (including what information to give and what not to give when job developing, such as SIN/marital status/banking info, etc.) and Job Scam Warning Signs (such as unprofessional/unedited emails or job postings, vague job descriptions, immediate hiring, etc.).</p>	
Skill Practice	<p>Computers with Internet access</p> <p>Documents (optional): Workplace Values and Transferable Skills Package &amp; Holland Code</p>	<p>The facilitator will have participants practice their job searching and labour market research skills independently, to become familiar with the process. The facilitator will direct them to the following online resources:</p> <p>Job search boards such as: Career Beacon, Indeed, Job Bank, Workopolis, etc.</p> <p>Sample: <a href="https://explorecareers.novascotia.ca/">https://explorecareers.novascotia.ca/</a></p> <p>At this point, participants will be asked only to become familiar with the websites' design and interface, and to practice navigating and sourcing information.</p>	<p>30 minutes</p> <p>Participants can use the worksheets completed earlier to help generate ideas for searching, but this is optional.</p>



Lesson Component	Required Materials/ Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
<b>Skill Application</b>	<p>PowerPoint presentation</p> <p>Computers with Internet access</p> <p>Documents: Skills Checklist, Labor Market Information (LMI) Research worksheet</p> <p>(optional): Workplace Values and Transferable Skills Package &amp; Holland Code</p> <p>I Would Fit Well in the Following Jobs worksheet</p>	<p>Participants will now be required to use their skills, values and Holland Code worksheets to seek out jobs online and research and record LMI for their own records.</p> <p>Participant will be asked to fill out the Labour Market Information (LMI) Research below.</p> <p>Note: NOC stands for National Occupational Classification. This provides a standardized language for describing the work performed by Canadians in the labour market. It gives statisticians, labour market analysts, career counsellors, employers and individual job seekers a consistent way to collect data, and to describe and understand the nature of work. For more information visit: <a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/noc.html">https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/noc.html</a></p> <p>Participants will then be directed to complete the I Would Fit Well in the Following Jobs worksheet, to summarize their understanding of sourcing complementary employment opportunities.</p>	<p>1 hour</p> <p>The facilitator should allow space for participants who may require extra time and/or support with this directive (either during, if time allows, or after the workshop).</p>
<b>Evaluation</b>	Evaluation form	Participant will complete a written evaluation form.	

## FACILITATOR NOTES

### Adaptations

This workshop is most effective when used in conjunction with **LAUNCH Atlantic**'s other workshops, most notably:

- Values & Transferable Skills
- Employment Skills, Values & Qualities
- Goals & Career Planning
- Résumé & Cover Letter Foundations
- Online Presence & LinkedIn

However, this workshop can also be used independently by including the following referencing documents in the **Stimulus** component:

- Workplace Values and Transferable Skills package
- Holland Code

### Debriefing and Assessment of Learning

The facilitator should provide support and guidance for participants who may have to re-evaluate employment goals based on LMI and/or employment needs, values and/or intersectional employment barriers.

## REFERENCES

Government of Canada. "National Occupation Classification." <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/noc.html>

Johnson, Eric M., Edwin Lehoahoa, Patrick Shaw, and Rob Urquhart. "Increasing Digital Platform Use to Help Youth Find Work." RTI Press, May 2020. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED606005.pdf>

Nova Scotia. "Explore Careers." <https://explorecareers.novascotia.ca/>

"The Face of Work." In *YWCA Discovering Life Skills*, Volume 7: pp.98-99. Toronto, ON: **YWCA Toronto**, 2006.

*"This program gave me more than expected knowledge and information including communication, professional etiquette, interview preparation and much more... As a new immigrant and without references, YWCA Halifax's LAUNCH program gave me the desire and a platform to step into my new professional life. I have begun my work placement as an Administrative Assistant. I am working as per my expectation and implementing almost everything I have learnt during the program at YWCA."*

(YWCA HALIFAX Participant)

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## 2.2 YWCA Hamilton, Ontario

### Building Your Business on Core Values

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**Lesson Time:**  
1.5-2 hours  
(excluding breaks)

This learning module was delivered by YWCA Hamilton as part of the curriculum of **PowerUp Ready Small Business Program**, which was the program documented for Phase Three of the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures (BSF) project.

Values are the norms and principles that we live by, that guide our actions every day. Our life's mission, whether personal, work or business, will ideally be guided by the values we choose to live by and to communicate to other people. Conflicts that do arise in our lives can often be attributed to a conflict with our values. Staying on track and being true to ourselves can help us maintain control in our daily lives and direct our business more successfully.

Core values underlie the messaging and policies of a business and influence a business owner's interactions with customers. While business success matters, connecting with customers on shared core values will build stronger relationships and, as a result, longer lasting clientele. They also help companies in decision-making processes, and can educate clients and potential customers on the company. Especially in this competitive world, having a set of specific core values that align with the public the company intends to serve is definitely an advantage.

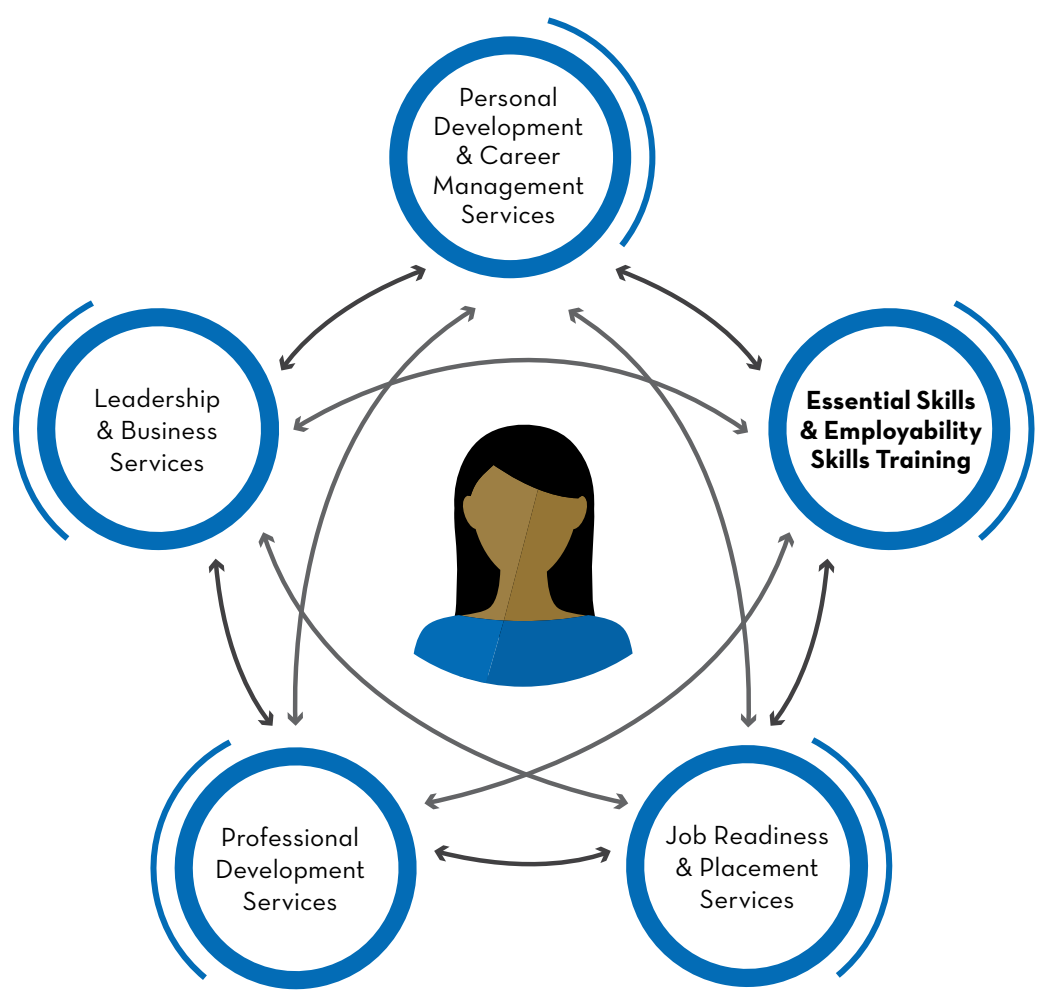
In this lesson, we first delve into identifying values that we relate to personally. We then organize these values in thematic groups and write a value statement that will guide our business decisions. We explore the possible alternatives of what happens when businesses follow their values and what happens when they do not. Many decisions are made early on in business, from choosing a business name to determining how the business will operate and communicate with its

customers. All business decisions will have an impact on both the internal component of your business and your external components, such as your customers, so they should relate back to our values.

*“Core business values can help you make important business decisions about hiring, training, short- and long-term strategy and leadership techniques. Additionally, current and potential customers and clients will often evaluate many things when considering whether or not to do business with a company, including their values and how well they demonstrate them. When a customer's values align with your company's, they are often more likely to continue doing business with you. It can be useful to come up with a list of your own personal values and then consider how they contribute to your idea of business success. For example, What values do you want to be known for in your industry? What values do you relate to in the companies you admire? How do you make important decisions in your personal life? Asking these questions can help you come up with a list of your most important personal values.”*

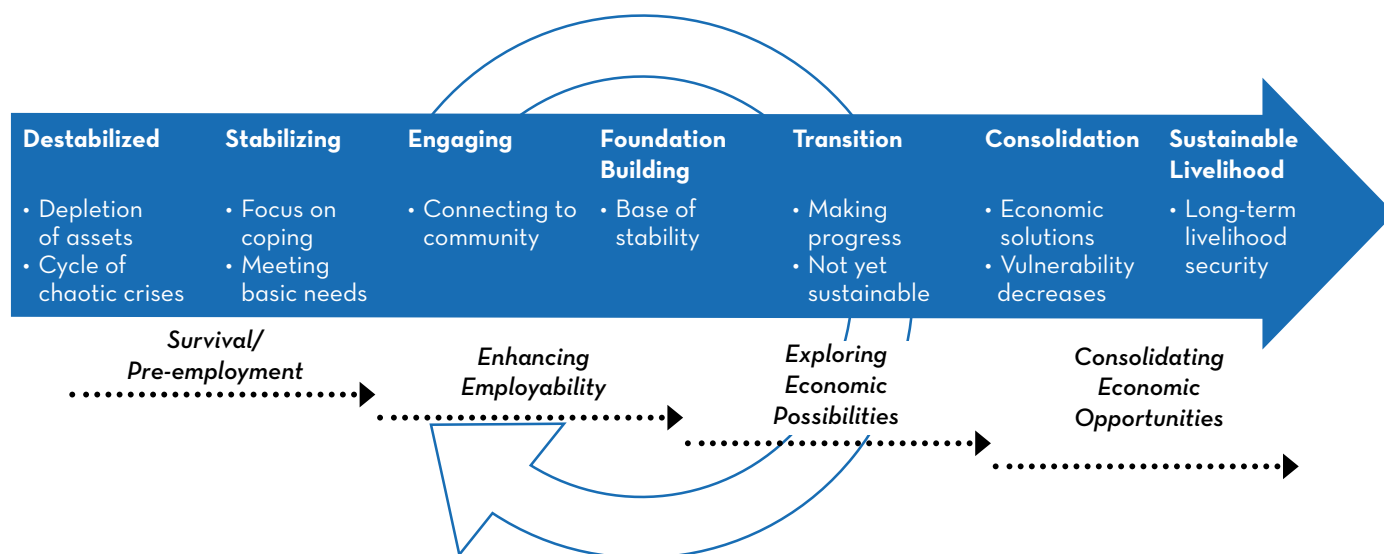
(Indeed)

YWCA BUILDING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES MODEL



This workshop falls within the **Essential Skills & Employability Training** component, but it could also be of foundational relevance to other components of the BSF model.

## STAGES OF LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT



With permission of Sustainable Livelihoods Canada

Participants for this workshop could fall under a range of stages of livelihood development, from **Pre-employment** to **Enhancing Employability** to **Exploring Economic Possibilities** all the way to **Consolidating Economic Opportunities**, since some may be unemployed and in the early start-up phase of their small businesses while others are already beginning to scale up their businesses.

## ESSENTIAL SKILLS INTEGRATED INTO THIS LESSON PLAN



READING



WRITING



DOCUMENT  
USE



NUMERACY



COMPUTER  
USE



THINKING



ORAL  
COMMUNICATION

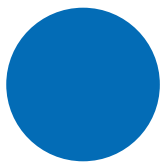


WORKING  
WITH OTHERS



CONTINUOUS  
LEARNING

### EMERGING LABOUR MARKET SKILLS INTEGRATED INTO THIS LESSON PLAN:



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE



ENTREPRENEURIAL APPROACH



FLEXIBLE/ADAPTABLE DIGITAL SKILLS



MOTIVATION AND SELF-DIRECTION

### YWCA HAMILTON, POWERUP READY

#### About the Association

YWCA Hamilton is a community-based Association with a mission to assist economically disadvantaged, marginalized, and diverse groups and individuals. Our services facilitate participation, access and equal opportunities, including support, training, assistance and advocacy. Our core services are: transitional housing; employment programs and supports; licensed child care centres; special programs for women and girls; leadership development for women and youth; developmental services; group homes; active living centres; newcomer settlement; and health and wellness. YWCA Hamilton's workforce skills and development programs work to connect women and gender diverse people to good jobs, innovation training and entrepreneurial opportunities.

#### Our Local Context

Many of our participants are struggling to deal with challenges in their lives, and with low self-esteem and motivation. Many are single parents working full time while looking after their children and working on their small businesses. Many are also highly educated, although we have noticed a serious gap in digital skills among some of the women who come to our programs.

#### Demographic Focus of the Program

Our **PowerUp Ready small business program** focuses on women entrepreneurs who are either starting or scaling up their businesses; only a small percentage are in receipt of government benefits, or need the housing supports that we offer as an Association. Participants in our program range in age mostly from 28-40 and 50-60. Since our webinars and consulting moved to virtual delivery in Spring 2020, we have been able to broaden our reach to offer our program to women and gender diverse participants from across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area.

### PROGRAM OUTLINE

#### Program Purpose

Entrepreneurship is the ultimate goal of the **PowerUp Ready** program. For most of our participants, the hardest part of running a business can be the day-to-day operations and learning the required financial literacy. But self-direction and motivation are also key, as entrepreneurs wear many hats and have to navigate their business activities largely on their own. Staying focused and positive is vital to making one's business work.

#### Program Description

Our program supports women entrepreneurs in small business ventures—to help them develop strategies and tactics, to connect them with contacts, and to keep them moving their businesses forward. Those who are accepted attend a free, intensive ten-week training program that includes lectures provided by trained business advisors and industry experts. Workshops are held bi-weekly through Zoom and feature topics such as starting your business, building resilience, business planning, marketing, finance, operations and legal issues. We begin with the YWCA BSF Asset Mapping webinar, which emphasizes the importance of goal setting in business plan development. YWCA Hamilton's adaptation of the YWCA BSF individual participant asset mapping tools to a small business focus is featured as a promising practice in the Phase Three Compendium, Section 4.



Participants then take a look at their core values, as showcased below in our Lesson Plan. These values will inform what they want their businesses to convey to their consumers and how those values will impact their brand development. A series of webinars delivered throughout the ten weeks covers the many facets of running a business. As new and existing owners of businesses, participants also have access to business advisory sessions, to obtain more customized advice. After learning about business planning, market research, sales, marketing, etc., participants prepare business plans, models and strategies, and present these to the group and to business advisors. As an added bonus, this creates an opportunity for networking and sharing resources, and refining their plans before finalization. This program has connected with hundreds of entrepreneurs in the community and has helped them look at entrepreneurship in a new light.

## LESSON OUTLINE

### Lesson Description

This workshop provides an in-depth look into the importance of making value driven decisions related to business. Intended for small business owners, this workshop is delivered in-person or as a webinar on the first day of our small business training program.

We start by delving into the values that we relate to personally, and then we organize them into thematic groups and write a value statement that will help us make decisions for our business based on these values. As participants might identify with many different values, the strategy of grouping these values allows them to see common themes. It is then easier for participants to pick their top three values, which is a necessary step ahead of writing their value statement.

Many decisions are made early on in business, from the choosing of a business name to how the business will operate and communicate with its customers. Such decisions will impact the operations of a business and its customers. With this in mind, all business decisions should align with its values. We will explore what happens when businesses follow their values, and what can happen when they do not.

An entrepreneurial approach is incorporated throughout the workshop as a primary focus, along with motivation and self-direction as emerging labour market skills. Motivation and self-direction are required skills when deciding which values influence us the most in our day-to-day decisions, and specifically in business decision-making. The exercise of self-reflection encourages participants to deeply reflect on their own values.

### Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this learning module, participants will:

- **Identify** their core values
- **Create** a cluster of values, to see the common themes
- **Develop** a value statement with their top three values, and how they relate to the business.

### Participant Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for participants prior to taking the session.

### Required Materials

A computer, and access to a platform such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams, if delivering as a webinar.

### Facilitator Resources

- Building Your Business on Core Values workbook (a pdf document sent ahead to participants, so they can access and print it prior to the session, to complete the exercises)
- PowerPoint presentation
- Business Model Canvas template
- L'Oréal Foundation: Our beliefs, our commitments, our actions (YouTube video)

### Total Time

1.5-2 hours (excluding breaks)

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
<b>Goals</b>	PowerPoint presentation	<p>The goals of this lesson are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify your core values;</li> <li>• create clusters of values; and,</li> <li>• develop a value statement with your top three values and how they relate to your business.</li> </ul> <p>Workshop Agenda (see below for detail):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to values in your business</li> <li>• Warm up—Guess Who?</li> <li>• Choose your values</li> <li>• Cluster your values</li> <li>• Video—values at the core of business</li> <li>• Break</li> <li>• Write a value statement using your top three values (group activity)</li> <li>• Brainstorm where to demonstrate using your values in your business</li> <li>• Debrief</li> </ul>	<p>3 minutes</p> <p>Before delivering the workshop, the facilitator should become familiar with the exercises and do a run-through for themselves in clustering and writing a value statement.</p>
<b>Rationale</b>	PowerPoint presentation	<p>Introduction to values:</p> <p>Definition: Values are the norms and principles that we live by and that guide our actions every day. Our life's mission, whether personal, work or business, will ideally be guided by the values we choose to live by and to communicate to other people.</p> <p>Conflicts that do arise in our lives can often be attributed to a conflict with our values. Staying on track and being true to ourselves can help us maintain control in our daily lives and direct our business more successfully.</p> <p>Core values underlie your business messaging and the practices of your business—such as how you sell to people, what and when you sell, how you deal with problems, giving back to community, etc.</p> <p>Your values influence your interactions with customers: while business success matters, connecting with customers on shared core values will build stronger relationships and, as a result, longer lasting clientele.</p>	4 minutes

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
(continued)		<p>Values also help businesses in their decision-making processes. For example, if one of your core values is to stand behind the quality of your products, any product not reaching the satisfactory standard should be automatically withdrawn from sale.</p> <p>Core values can also educate clients and potential customers about what the company is about and shape the identity of the company. In the competitive business world, having a set of specific core values that align with their customer base is definitely an advantage.</p> <p>An example of a company choosing to stand by the values that were core to its business:</p> <p>Zappos is an online shoe and clothing retailer that was established in 1999. In 2009, Amazon bought the company for \$1.2 billion US. As of April 1, 2011, Zappos decided to stop shipping to Canada because it could no longer maintain its high levels of customer service due to logistical factors—one of its core values had been “to deliver ‘wow’ through service” (see slide deck for a list of Zappos core values).</p>	
Warm-up	<p>PowerPoint presentation</p> <p>Google Jamboard</p>	<p>Group warm-up exercise—alternatives to try with your group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guess who? If you could be anyone in the world, who would it be (e.g., a famous person, celebrity, politician, author, artist or mentor)? Do not tell us who it is! We will try to guess the person. What are the key characteristics or values of this person that you identify with most?</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Values of a great leader (in real-time using Google Jamboard) Ask the group: What are the key values of a great leader? Have them post their values on the Jamboard.</li> </ul> <p>Debrief: Let us explore how these characteristics relate to values that we appreciate and connect with, as they resonate with our own lives and values. There is a parallel here to the world of business: customers relate in the same way to a company that shares their strongest values.</p>	<p>10 minutes, depending on the size of the group; a larger one may take longer.</p> <p>If using a virtual Whiteboard, participants should first be given editing rights in order for them to access it.</p>

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Stimulus	PowerPoint presentation  Building Your Business on Core Values workbook	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From the long list on your values worksheet, check off those you relate to most (worksheet A, p.2 of workbook).</li> <li>Identify your values clusters (worksheet B, p.3 of workbook).</li> </ol> <p>For the clustering activity, the facilitator should provide examples for participants. For example, knowledge might be a heading of a cluster, and it might include education and vision. Family might be another heading and might include respect, kindness and responsibility. This facilitation will help participants to pick their top three values, which they will then write into a value statement.</p> <p>Later, in the Skill Practice component, participants will connect these top three values to their business.</p>	12-15 minutes  Participants should be provided with the values worksheet before this exercise.
Evocation	PowerPoint presentation	<p>What stood out for you when choosing and clustering values? Did you think of a situation that triggered your response as you picked your values? Reflect back on the exercise.</p> <p>Have your values changed over time?</p> <p>Why is it important for you to identify your values in your business?</p> <p>Can you reflect on a time where you used your values to guide your decision-making?</p> <p>How will your values be messaged to your customers?</p>	3 minutes

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Objective Inquiry	<p>PowerPoint presentation</p> <p>L'Oréal Foundation: Our beliefs, our commitments, our actions (YouTube video)</p>	<p>Identifying one's own values puts a spotlight on them and can help a person keep grounded and aligned with their goals. In business there are many ways to make money, but an increasing number of companies are finding success through connecting with consumers' core values.</p> <p>Examples of these may be: ethical sourcing of raw materials, respect for human rights and the environment, fair working conditions for employees, guaranteed quality of its products, and excellent customer service.</p> <p>Show video: L'Oréal Foundation: Our beliefs, our commitments, our actions (YouTube video)  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=am4Tvj5KWhk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=am4Tvj5KWhk</a></p> <p>Values in business can impact a customer's buying decisions</p> <p>What values did you see displayed by this company in the video?</p> <p>What is the impact of a company's strong values on prospective and existing customers?</p> <p>What can happen when a company does not live up to its values?</p> <p>Give an example of a company NOT living up to its values. E.g., Lululemon produced yoga bottoms that were far too thin and transparent, and as a result had to stop selling them and provide refunds to those who already purchased them. This cost the company millions of dollars, and their CEO resigned as a result of the issue. The company had failed to stick to its values, one of which is to guarantee the quality of its manufactured product.</p> <p>Share these articles about the example:  <a href="https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2013/03/lululemons-too-thin-yoga-pants-fiasco-could-cost-company-20-million/317240/">https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2013/03/lululemons-too-thin-yoga-pants-fiasco-could-cost-company-20-million/317240/</a>  <a href="https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2013/06/lululemon-ceo-stepping-down/314417/">https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2013/06/lululemon-ceo-stepping-down/314417/</a></p>	10 minutes
BREAK 5 minutes (optional)			

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Skill Practice	PowerPoint presentation	Bridge: Before the break, we watched a video about a company that clearly showcases their values. Let us take a look at our own values and value statements, to see how they can contribute to the success of our business.	17 minutes in total
	Building Your Business on Core Values workbook	Test drive your values: 1. Choose your top three values from your value worksheet (worksheet A, p.2 of workbook) 2. Write a value statement (worksheet C, p.4 of workbook). How do these values relate to your businesses?	
		(This exercise can be done in smaller break-out groups if participants would like to brainstorm together, or with the whole group allowing time for individual reflection.)	4 minutes
		Refer to the slide deck: looking at your personal values, how do you think you can leverage them in your business? For example: one of our program graduates is using a refill business as a strategy to address its environmental footprint, especially in terms of packaging and labelling.	10 minutes
		The facilitator can provide an example of value statements, such as:  Top three values: family, leadership and community.  Value statement: I am someone who values spending time with my family, supporting community initiatives, and playing a leadership role in my activities.  Relate the statement back to the business: This value statement becomes important when working in the business, in making time for family, and in creating a “family” of clients. Also, time and/or revenue can be invested in initiatives that support people in the community.	3 minutes



Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Skill Application	PowerPoint presentation  Business Model Canvas	<p>Your top values will be relevant when you speak to your customers. They can also set you apart from other companies in a similar sector in your Unique Value Proposition (UVP) (see Business Model Canvas).</p> <p>Determining a UVP allows the business owner to see how they are adding value to the customer, how they are different from their competition, and what problem(s) they are solving. Generally, a company's core values are outlined in their UVP.</p> <p>Brainstorm: How do you incorporate values into the business?</p> <p>A great small business owner will think of strategies to attract and retain customers, and build their trust. These strategies may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality guarantees</li> <li>• Fair returns policies</li> <li>• Policies on sales (e.g., information for prospective buyers that is posted on your website)</li> <li>• Sales techniques that are not manipulative</li> <li>• Building relationships and following up with clients to ensure satisfaction and inform them about new products, etc.</li> <li>• Offering solutions not gimmicks</li> </ul> <p>Conclusion: incorporating strong, consistent values into your messaging and marketing, and into other areas of your business, will help you to attract and keep customers.</p>	<p>5 minutes</p> <p>For the brainstorm: The facilitator can ask participants for a few examples of strategies to attract and retain customers and then give them some options. Allow participants time to consider and provide answers to ensure best learning outcomes. If they get stuck coming up with answers, then the facilitator can move to the answers on Slide 24.</p>

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Evaluation	PowerPoint presentation	<p>Facilitate a discussion with the group to tie the learning objectives back into what was achieved.</p> <p>Referring to these questions on the slide deck: When you picked your top three values, how did you give them meaning?</p> <p>What did you learn about values and your choices? What surprised you?</p> <p>Do these values make you feel good about yourself and your company?</p> <p>How can these values help promote your business and keep customers coming back?</p> <p>Ask participants to choose one of the questions. Give them a minute to reflect and then share.</p> <p>Conclusion: Identifying and articulating your core values are very important for the success of your business. Entrepreneurs have to make decisions every day, and these decisions should reflect their values if they are to maintain their customers. Staying true to your core values also reduces the potential for conflict between your personal life and your business, and as a result creates less stress.</p>	<p>15-20 minutes, depending on group size.</p> <p>Ideally, the facilitator should ask each person about what the session meant to them and how they think they can use it going forward.</p>

## FACILITATOR NOTES

The facilitator should become familiar with all of the examples used, including those in the video and in the articles. They must also work through the exercises for themselves in order to understand how to cluster values, and write their own value statement, before delivering this lesson to participants.

## REFERENCES

Estes, Adam Clark. "Lululemon's Too-Thin Yoga Pants Fiasco Could Cost the Company Over \$20 Million." *The Atlantic*, March 18, 2013. <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2013/03/lululemons-too-thin-yoga-pants-fiasco-could-cost-company-20-million/317240/>

Foundation L'Oréal. "L'Oréal Foundation: Our beliefs, our commitments, our actions." YouTube, July 4, 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=am4Tvj5KWWhk>

Indeed. "21 Company Core Values to Consider For Your Business With Examples." <https://www.indeed.com/hire/c/info/company-values>

Simpson, Connor. "Lululemon Loses Its Head After See-Through Pants Scandal." *The Atlantic*, June 10, 2013. <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2013/06/lululemon-ceo-stepping-down/314417/>

## 2.3 YWCA Metro Vancouver, British Columbia

### Self-Esteem

**Lesson Time:**  
**2 hours**  
(excluding breaks)

This learning module was delivered by YWCA Metro Vancouver as part of the curriculum of **FOCUS@Work**, which was the program documented for Phase Three of the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures (BSF) project.

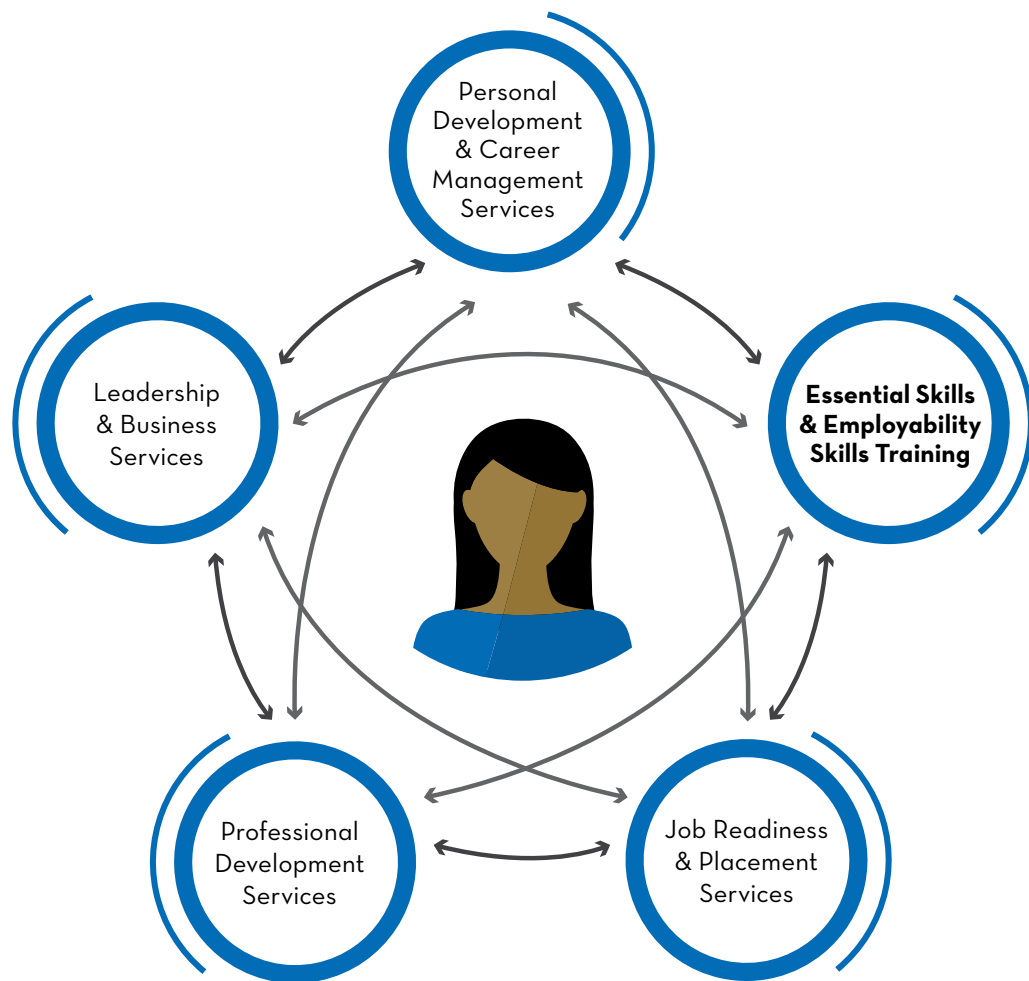
Self-esteem is required for the resiliency to deal effectively with navigating changes in life and to deepen relationships and connections. By increasing their awareness of skill sets and strengths, and their ability to communicate these effectively, participants will be better positioned to succeed in employment opportunities in a competitive job market.

*“In the workplace, having a solid sense of self-worth can improve your job performance in a wide range of aspects. High self-esteem frequently relates to self-confidence, which is believing in one’s capabilities, traits, and wisdom. Acknowledging your worth can boost your work engagement, resulting in higher productivity and better connections with teammates. Believing in yourself allows you to trust your judgment and make good decisions, which are crucial leadership traits that can give you an edge in your profession.”*

(Flexispot, 2021)

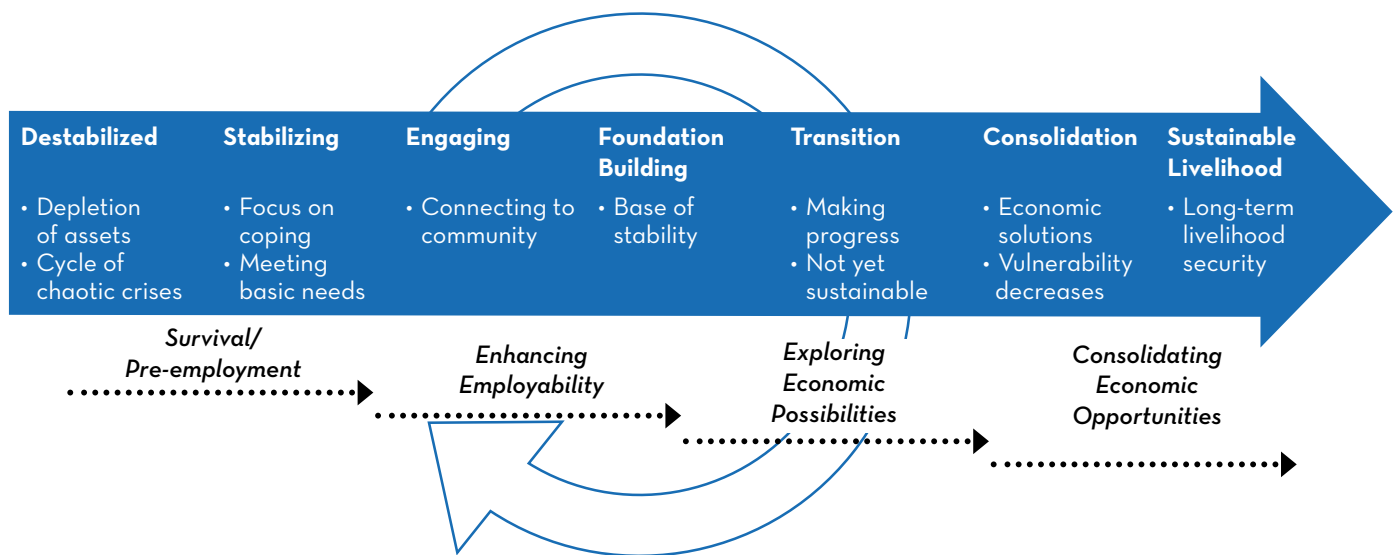


YWCA BUILDING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES MODEL



This lesson falls under the **Essential Skills & Employability Skills Training** component. The aim is to enhance participants’ efficacy, power of choice and life possibilities through increasing their awareness of and building on their strengths.

## STAGES OF LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT



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Although the women who come to our program are often moving back and forth along the continuum of stages, this workshop falls under the **Enhancing Employability** livelihood stage.

## ESSENTIAL SKILLS INTEGRATED INTO THIS LESSON PLAN



READING



WRITING



DOCUMENT  
USE



NUMERACY



COMPUTER  
USE



THINKING



ORAL  
COMMUNICATION

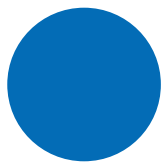


WORKING  
WITH OTHERS

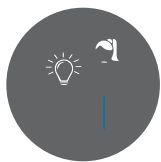


CONTINUOUS  
LEARNING

### EMERGING LABOUR MARKET SKILLS INTEGRATED INTO THIS LESSON PLAN



EMOTIONAL  
INTELLIGENCE



ENTREPRENEURIAL  
APPROACH



FLEXIBLE/ADAPTABLE  
DIGITAL SKILLS



MOTIVATION AND  
SELF-DIRECTION

### YWCA METRO VANCOUVER, FOCUS@WORK

#### About the Association

We boldly envision a just and equitable world for women, families and allies. We advance gender equity alongside women, families, two-spirit and gender diverse people through advocacy and integrated services that help support personal, collective and economic well-being, and equal opportunities. We recognize the importance of essential skills programming and how it relates to achieving our mission.

#### Demographic Focus of the Program

We serve all women and gender diverse people who are work ready or in career transition; the median age of those coming to our program is around 40. A significant percentage are newcomers to Canada, many of whom are highly educated and highly skilled, while others have a basic level of education.

#### Our Local Context

Established in 1996, **Focus@Work** is one of the longest-running programs offered by **YWCA Metro Vancouver** and is well known in the local community. The program has changed over the years, to adapt to job seekers' needs, but it has maintained a focus on building community, group-based support, personal growth and networking. Currently Vancouver faces complex social issues including poverty, addiction and housing shortages. Despite the low unemployment rate in Vancouver, the combination of the high cost of living and rising inflation has made circumstances challenging for some women in our community, although some have family savings and/or support. **Focus@Work** routinely updates programming and refers participants to wraparound services provided by **YWCA Metro Vancouver** and community partners, to address the unique needs of women and their families.

### PROGRAM OUTLINE

#### Program Purpose

The aim of **Focus@Work** is to help participants to achieve economic and employment sustainability. We serve women and gender diverse people from all of the four project demographic groups; the program is for those who are work ready or in career transition. Many participants have been out of the workplace for a while (e.g., for family reasons), have suffered shocks, or are “stuck” and have lost motivation; they often experience low self-esteem and confidence.

## Program Description

**Focus@Work** is a recognized employment program that equips participants with the skills to promote themselves to employers, learn about suitable work environments and careers, and gain confidence in building their personal and professional networks. The program offers three weeks of full-time workshops covering topics ranging from: values assessment, diversity/inclusion/belonging in the workplace, essential skills for success, job boards, growth mindset, self-care, résumés, accomplishment statements, cover letters, “skills for success 2” (asset mapping), personal branding and LinkedIn, job-related information and mock interviews, networking, etc. There are also group coaching sessions where we split the cohort into two groups to create a more individualized setting; and we have created self-led study periods to allow space for participants to demonstrate leadership and team collaboration, and to practice their online skills together. Participants then receive nine weeks of follow-up support, including five individual coaching sessions, once a week group meet-ups, and the use of the Slack platform for communicating articles of interest, jobs, training opportunities and **Focus@Work**-organized guest speaker events. All of this provides a rich and supportive environment for both career search learning and community building.

We have recently evolved into a hybrid program, which involves a first- and last-day in-person session, as well as in-person group coaching once a week, at two points during the program. These sessions help build strong connections among staff and participants. Otherwise, all workshops are delivered virtually via Zoom. **Focus@Work** was our pilot program for Phase Two. For Phase Three, we have introduced SHETalks (SHE = Seen, Heard, Empowered), our weekly peer support program, to better prepare our clients to succeed in the labour market as it moves beyond COVID-19. SHETalks is featured in the Phase Three Compendium, Section 4, as a promising practice in creating an online platform to build peer-to-peer connections, networking and support.

## LESSON OUTLINE

### Lesson Description

This lesson plan is designed to develop self-awareness and self-efficacy, to build a person’s power to face challenges competently and to help inform the choices they may make. Topics covered in this lesson include: developing a healthy sense of self; encouraging curiosity versus judgement of self; a competency inventory; and an increased ability to make choices and communicate strengths and assets.

While the lesson plan could be suited to a wide range of individuals, our main audience is women who are generally market-ready to find work. The lesson is designed to be delivered virtually via Zoom.

### Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this learning module, participants will:

- **Explore** their own strengths and develop an inventory of their competencies
- **Expand** their self-awareness

### Participant Prerequisites

- A willingness to learn with curiosity
- A level of self-awareness, to be encouraged by a short centring exercise

### Required Materials

- Blank paper
- Zoom Whiteboard
- Coloured markers/pencils

### Facilitator Resources

- PowerPoint presentation
- This Little Girl Knows How to Use Affirmations (YouTube video)
- Meet Yourself: A User’s Guide to Building Self-Esteem, Niko Everett (YouTube video)

### Lesson Time

2 hours (excluding breaks)



Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Goals	PowerPoint presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To facilitate participants' exploration of their strengths and develop an inventory of their competencies.</li> <li>To encourage them to expand their self-awareness based on this learning.</li> </ul>	5 minutes
Rationale	PowerPoint presentation	<p>The aim is to enhance participants' efficacy, power of choice and life possibilities through increasing their awareness of and building on their strengths.</p> <p>Self-esteem is required for the resiliency to deal effectively with navigating changes in one's life and to deepen relationships and connections.</p> <p>By increasing their awareness of their skill sets and strengths, and their ability to communicate these effectively, participants will be better positioned to succeed in employment opportunities in a competitive job market.</p>	5 minutes
Warm-up	PowerPoint presentation	<p>Welcome and Territory Acknowledgement</p> <p>The facilitator will then introduce an exercise, Two Truths and a Lie: Everyone is asked to tell two truths and a lie, and then people have to guess which one is the lie as we go around the circle.</p> <p>This exercise is designed to promote self-awareness and disclosure, identifying the unique attributes that each individual brings to the group, and building trust and connection. It sets the tone for the session.</p>	15 minutes
Stimulus	YouTube video: Meet Yourself: A User's Guide to Building Self-Esteem (Niko Everett)	Show video: <a href="#">Meet Yourself: A User's Guide to Building Self-Esteem: Niko Everett at TEDxYouth@BommerCanyon</a> - YouTube	<p>10 minutes</p> <p>Please note that an eating disorder is mentioned during this video, so any potential triggers should be discussed in advance.</p>

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Evocation	Whiteboard	<p>After watching the video on self-esteem, the facilitator will ask participants to share what components they think make up healthy self-esteem.</p> <p>The facilitator should explain how to use the Whiteboard in Zoom. Then encourage participants to write words on it randomly that they think reflect healthy self-esteem, whether in themselves or in those they admire.</p>	25 minutes
<b>BREAK 15 minutes (optional)</b>			
Objective Inquiry	PowerPoint presentation	<p>While self-esteem is a concept that we hear a lot about, its importance can not be understated. Low self-esteem has been tied to a number of health and social challenges, including: depression/sadness, anxiety, avoiding social situations, feelings of inadequacy, negative comparisons of self to others, low expectations, difficulty in trusting one's own judgement, unemployment, and/or chronic underemployment, and the neglect of one's own needs.</p> <p>Low self-esteem can negatively affect all areas of a person's life, and the satisfaction and fulfillment derived from it, as well as rob people of joy and vibrancy.</p> <p>The good news is that we can boost our level of self-esteem. You may have heard the saying, "Change your mind, and you change your life". Science, in particular neuroscience, shows us how this is possible. Thanks to large bodies of scientific research done over the past couple of decades, we now know that we can change our limiting beliefs and rewire our brains toward different, improved outcomes.</p> <p>Although there is no one-size-fits-all approach to building self-esteem, most people would agree that life is much better when we find ways to increase not just our self-esteem but also our sense of self-worth.</p> <p>We can expand our self-esteem with some conscious awareness and a few simple, committed habits. To do so, we must draw upon our curiosity.</p>	<p>20 minutes</p> <p>The facilitator should reflect in advance on what skills and behaviour they can teach/demonstrate that might support participants' ability to learn the lesson goals.</p>

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
(continued)		<p>The facilitator can start by suggesting that each participant come to the lesson with a curious and open frame of mind, ready to examine their own thoughts and to challenge any limiting beliefs that may be affecting their self-esteem.</p> <p>The aim here is to support this conscious self-awareness while we develop and increase our range of choices and opportunities to integrate strengths as we move towards our goals. Increased self-esteem also offers us greater possibilities for success and satisfaction.</p> <p>Potential areas of growth include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-awareness</li> <li>• Increased vocabulary and ability to communicate strength-based skills</li> <li>• Communication and connection: being able to describe strengths in a way that connects to others and/or creates opportunities for providing solutions to employers' needs based on strengths and experience</li> <li>• Risk-taking and understanding the importance of boundaries in self-disclosure, as well as what support might be needed following the process of sharing, which can leave an individual feeling vulnerable</li> <li>• Trust building through connection</li> <li>• Increased self-esteem and the ability to demonstrate leadership through communication of skills</li> </ul>	
Skills Practice	YouTube video This Little Girl Knows How to Do Affirmations	<p>Show video: <a href="#">This Little Girl Knows How to Do Affirmations</a> – YouTube</p> <p>Breakout Group Activity: Ask participants to identify two areas in which they feel they have strengths.</p> <p>Structure the group into breakout rooms of two people and give them five minutes to share with each other two things they admire about themselves.</p> <p>Return everyone to the main room to share responses to the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What strengths did you witness?</li> <li>• What strengths did you reveal?</li> </ul>	10 minutes

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
<b>Skills Application</b>	PowerPoint presentation	<p>Using the language explained in the video, ask participants, “What they want to turn the volume up and down on.”</p> <p>This skills application is also an exercise in looking at self-esteem from a different lens; in this case, using creativity (colouring words or drawing).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give participants five minutes to write out words or draw a representation of these words. Encourage them to be creative with colour and “volume up” words (things they may want to expand upon).</li> <li>• Afterwards, ask participants to write down two to three positive affirmations (provide an example of what a positive affirmation is) using their “volume up” words/skills. Allow them eight minutes for this step.</li> <li>• Once they are finished, encourage them to share their affirmations and then to paste these in a visible place in their homes (e.g., on a bathroom mirror) and repeat these affirmations daily (morning or evening, depending on what works best).</li> </ul>	30 minutes
<b>Evaluation</b>	Whiteboard	<p>Facilitator review with group, using Whiteboard to record feedback.</p> <p>Did we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify how self-esteem is linked to resilience?</li> <li>• Demonstrate that self-esteem is fluid and detail how it can be altered (increased and decreased)?</li> <li>• Show how our thoughts and the stories we tell about our lives can shape our self-esteem?</li> <li>• Build our awareness of our unique strengths?</li> <li>• Name and grow our inventory of competencies?</li> <li>• Experience receiving feedback from others on your strengths.</li> <li>• Increased our self-esteem as a result of identifying and naming strengths and competencies in the lesson’s exercises?</li> </ul>	15 minutes

## FACILITATOR NOTES

- Ensure that annotation is enabled on Zoom.
- The facilitator should reflect in advance on what skills and behaviour they can teach/demonstrate that might support participants' ability to learn the lesson goals.

## REFERENCES

Everett, Niko. "Meet Yourself: A User's Guide to Building Self-Esteem: Niko Everett at TEDxYouth@BommerCanyon." YouTube, February 8, 2013.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uOrzmFUJtrs>

FlexiSpot. "Understanding Self-Esteem and Its Significance in the Workplace." July 4, 2021.  
<https://flexispot.co.uk/blog/understanding-self-esteem-and-its-significance-in-the-workplace>

Starr, Becca. "This Girl Knows How to Use Affirmations." YouTube, January 30, 2013.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-W727P7oJHU>

*"I had been working in Hospitality for many years, and after losing my job because of COVID 19, I found myself in a difficult situation. Being alone in a foreign country, as an immigrant and a woman without secure employment, I felt desperate, disappointed, and on the edge of deciding to return back to my country of origin. I needed help. Luckily, while browsing on the Internet, I saw an ad about YWCA **FOCUS@Work** and decided to apply as I had nothing to lose even if it was well out of my comfort zone. It was the best decision that I made in a while! I have met a group of wonderful, smart, and supportive women who truly care about my success. I made friends and meaningful connections that are going to last. My learning process was tremendous and after a couple of months of hard work, I got a job with one of the biggest telecommunication companies in Canada. I became more confident in my abilities and all of that happened because of this program. It gave me wings, and saying that I am truly grateful and humbled by the experience is an understatement. Thank you!"*

(YWCA METRO VANCOUVER Participant)

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## 2.4 YWCA Moncton, New Brunswick

### Lived Experience as Transferable Skills

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**Lesson Time:**  
**1.5 hours**  
(excluding breaks)

This learning module was delivered by YWCA Moncton as part of the curriculum of **Employment My Way**, which was the program documented for Phase Three of the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures (BSF) project.

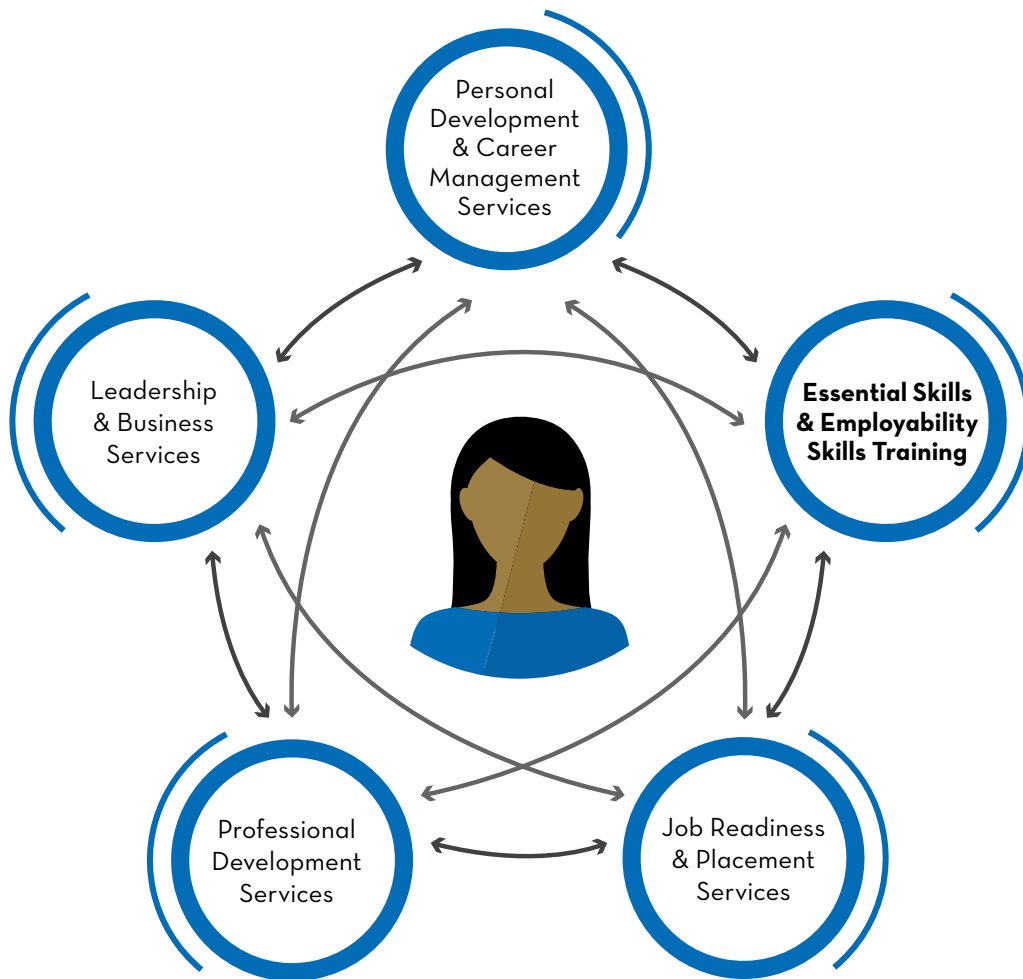
Implementing lived experiences as transferable skills builds confidence and helps people to recognize the skills they have already gained through their life journey. By valuing their lived experiences, they can move forward with added confidence to promote themselves in starting a business or re-entering the workforce while navigating barriers that women and gender diverse youth – the demographic of our program – and many others often face.

When navigating new cultural norms, we acknowledge that there are different levels of understanding and awareness of soft and hard skills. By focusing on developing confidence, motivation and emotional intelligence, we can illustrate the importance of each particular skill in relation to the goal of self-employment.



*“Throughout your professional and personal life, you have picked up habits, abilities, and skills that make you the employee you are today. These are called transferable skills. They are the skills that allow an eager, younger graduate to land their first ‘real job.’ ... or a parent who has been out of the workforce for months or years to return successfully.... Transferable skills increase through experience, time, and development opportunities, such as training, one-to-one coaching, and mentoring. By time and work experience, we mean that you have been building these skills since you took your first job at a local fast-food restaurant or volunteered as a camp counselor, and you will continue to hone them for the rest of your life.”*  
(May, 2021)

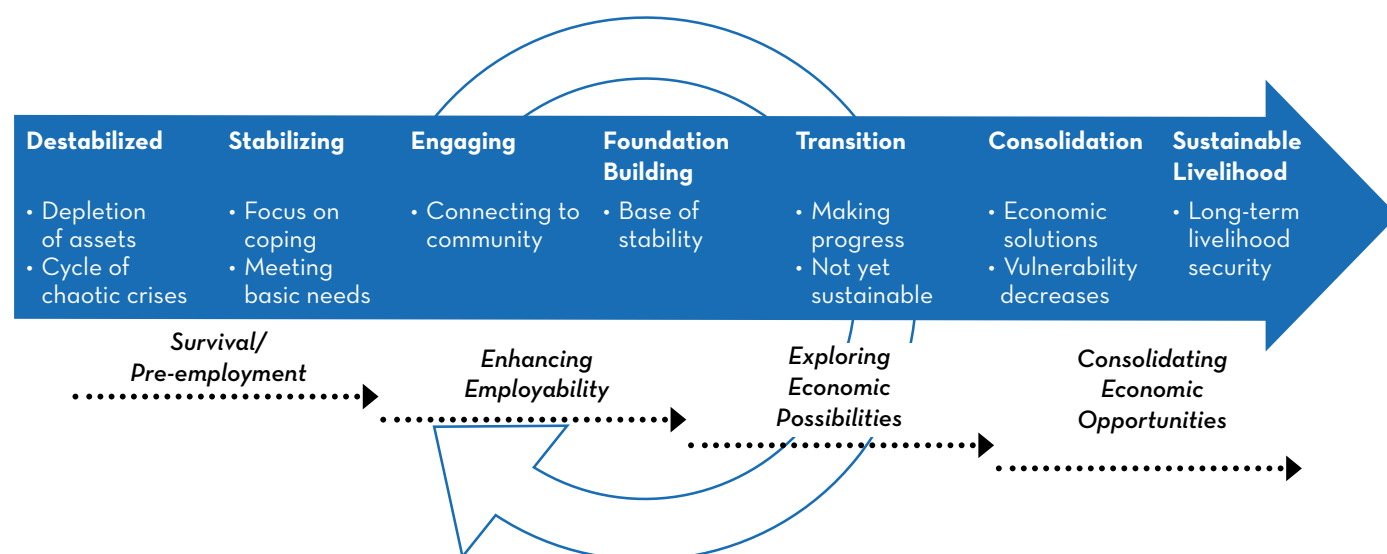
## YWCA BUILDING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES MODEL



This workshop falls under the **Essential Skills & Employability Skills Training** component. Exploring and acknowledging skills that have developed through participants' lived experiences can contribute to enhancing their positive self-regard as it relates to employability. These skills and experiences can be drawn on to develop résumés and return-to-work action plans, and/or to identify next steps relating to economic empowerment.



## STAGES OF LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT



With permission of Sustainable Livelihoods Canada

The women and gender diverse youth who come to our program may be at any stage on the continuum of livelihood development, but for this workshop the emphasis is mostly on **Enhancing Employability** and **Exploring Economic Opportunities**.

## ESSENTIAL SKILLS INTEGRATED INTO THIS LESSON PLAN



READING



WRITING



DOCUMENT  
USE



NUMERACY



COMPUTER  
USE



THINKING



ORAL  
COMMUNICATION

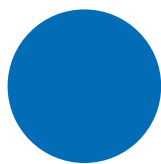


WORKING  
WITH OTHERS



CONTINUOUS  
LEARNING

## EMERGING LABOUR MARKET SKILLS INTEGRATED INTO THIS LESSON PLAN



EMOTIONAL  
INTELLIGENCE



ENTREPRENEURIAL  
APPROACH



FLEXIBLE/ADAPTABLE  
DIGITAL SKILLS



MOTIVATION AND  
SELF-DIRECTION

## YWCA MONCTON, EMPLOYMENT MY WAY

### About the Association

We support and empower women, gender diverse individuals, and their families through advocacy and integrated services that foster independence, wellness and equity for all. Personal empowerment is a key area of focus; this includes support to achieve economic and personal milestones relating to employment and life skills. As a growing organization experiencing a period of renewal, we have had to contend with a number of challenges. Drawing on community partnerships and the broader YWCA movement, as well as our commitment to a client-centred approach, has consistently ensured that challenges become learning opportunities. Since 2020, we have been part of the **LAUNCH Atlantic** regional partnership (see the Phase Three Compendium, Section 4).

### Demographic Focus of the Program

**Employment My Way** is designed to serve women and gender diverse youth ranging from 16–30 years who are facing barriers to economic security, and where normalized learning styles are not suited for them. It also focuses on women who are interested in learning about self-employment. Our main demographic is women living in poverty (as per the low-income measurement tools).

### Our Local Context

Part of our work within our Beechwood community consists of meetings and soliciting input from community members. We take note of what they identify as systemic issues. For example, we obtained funding from TD Bank/Prosper Canada to develop a financial literacy program tailored to the needs of women accessing public income supports. Recently, we have seen a large influx of immigration and migration to New Brunswick without enough services to support them. There is also a huge lack of affordable housing in Moncton, and the cost of living has risen with inflation.

## PROGRAM OUTLINE

### Purpose

**Employment My Way** is a self-employment program that aims to engage local entrepreneurs in supporting participants toward developing and running a successful business. The purpose is to empower participants to stabilize their lives, build a holistic range of livelihood assets, and enhance their essential skills toward full participation in the labour market. Although there are other business development programs in the community, because our program is based upon an equity framework that recognizes and responds to the nuances of women and gender diverse peoples, we remain an important pillar of the economic development sector. We aim to help participants move from stabilizing their lives to transitioning toward a sustainable livelihood.

## Description

The program takes a strength-based, client-centred approach that recognizes participants' unique and varied individual backgrounds, experiences and strengths. It is particularly targeted toward women living in low-income households and welcomes newcomer women. Part of our program now focuses on networking, practising English and exposure to Canadian culture. For self-employed individuals, the development of social assets is an integral aspect of advancing within the economic landscape.

**Employment My Way** also provides workshops that help participants expand their personal, professional and financial skillsets. Workshops and program activities teach them methods that build self-confidence and provide them with access to various community supports. The Essential Skills for Employment are taught during workshops and significantly improve participants' ability to lead and flourish in various types of work environments. For example, participants develop basic understandings of accounting, budgeting, personal/business cash flows, etc., which in turn boosts their financial literacy and prepares them to run successful businesses.

By partnering participants with mentors from local organizations, the program ensures that participants gain meaningful knowledge from those who have met the challenges of running businesses. Once they have gathered knowledge from these partnerships, participants can apply learning to their own businesses, increasing the possibility they will experience successful business outcomes. They are not only improving in the skills required to flourish within the employment sector. They also have consistent access to experienced individuals beyond the scope of the program.

## LESSON OUTLINE

### Lesson Description

This lesson explores how our everyday roles, responsibilities and activities can all be skills transferable for employment. It is ideal for individuals who have been precariously employed, underemployed and/or unemployed and seeking to return to work. This workshop serves as a first step toward identifying the many skills and talents participants already possess. It can be delivered both in-person and virtually.

### Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this learning module, participants will:

- **Identify** the soft and technical employability skills they have developed through lived-experience
- **Develop** descriptors for personal skills, attributes and talents for building their résumés.

### Participant Prerequisites

- None specifically; the purpose is to focus on lived experiences over work experiences.

### Required Materials

- Popsicle sticks
- Guess Who Characters: strips of paper with famous individuals on each strip
- Flipchart or Whiteboard and markers
- Pens/pencils

### Facilitator Resources

- PowerPoint presentation
- Prior Learning Awareness Recognition (PLAR) worksheet
- Lived Experience as Employable Skills worksheet (Adapted from **YWCA Metro Vancouver**, How to Build a Résumé When Your Work Experience is Varied, 2015; see References, below.)
- Lived Experience and Employment worksheet
- Evaluation form
- Completed résumés (optional)

### Lesson Time

1.5 hours (excluding breaks)

Lesson Component	Required Materials/ Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Goal	PowerPoint presentation	To explore lived experience as it relates to our skills and abilities, and how it can be used to gain meaningful employment.	2 minutes
Rationale	PowerPoint presentation	Exploring and acknowledging skills that have developed through participants' lived experiences will contribute to enhancing their positive self-regard as it relates to employability. This knowledge can be then drawn on to develop résumés and return-to-work action plans, and/or to identify next steps relating to economic empowerment.	2 minutes
Warm-up	Guess Who Characters: strips of paper with famous individuals' names on each strip	<p>Warm-up Exercise: Guess Who</p> <p>The warm-up is fairly long due to the nature of the workshop, which can touch on personal issues for some participants. It is important that enough time is given to ensure all participants feel comfortable moving forward with the session.</p> <p>Depending on the size of the group, participants can either pair up or complete the warm-up as a group.</p> <p>One at a time, a participant will choose a card with a famous character's name on it. The rest of the group will then ask the participant holding the card yes-or-no-style questions in order to figure out who the mystery celebrity is.</p> <p>The warm-up keeps going until every participant has had a turn picking their famous character.</p>	15 minutes
Stimulus	PowerPoint presentation  Popsicle sticks  Quote written on flip chart or Whiteboard	<p>"Because of my varied work and life experience, I am an adaptable, flexible and skilled person who hits the ground running." – Personal mantra/YWCA Metro Vancouver</p> <p>Ask participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you think this quote means?</li> <li>• Do you agree with this quote, and if so, a little or a lot?</li> <li>• Have participants use popsicle sticks to demonstrate how little (1) or how much (up to 4).</li> </ul>	5 minutes

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
<b>Evocation</b>	Prior Learning Awareness Recognition (PLAR) worksheet	<p>Have participants create a Prior Learning Awareness and Recognition (PLAR) timeline on the blank page of this worksheet, and include the dates of each item as they list them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education &amp; training</li> <li>• Life events: having a child, changing partners/relationships, moving, changing careers, health—any shift in your world</li> <li>• Places where you have lived</li> <li>• Employment/jobs/experience: stay-at-home mom, student, casual/temp, responsible for home tasks, etc.</li> </ul>	30 minutes
<b>Objective Inquiry</b>	<p>PowerPoint presentation</p> <p>Life Experience and Employment worksheet</p>	<p>My Life = My Skills:</p> <p>Many people are concerned that having a varied career and many different jobs may be less valuable than having one straightforward career path. Similarly, it is a common misconception that a variety of jobs means you have not yet found your passion.</p> <p>The fact is that many people have jobs, not careers. Some have had a career and now simply like having a job with less responsibility. Some might have travelled, raised a family, recovered from an illness, gone to school, or even taken a sabbatical. It is also possible that their passions lie outside of work and they work to live, rather than live to work.</p> <p>If any of the above resonates with you personally, know that your life experiences are valid and valuable. In fact, companies need people like you. You have developed just the kind of traits and skills that companies require in this fast-changing global economy.</p> <p>Having had several jobs could mean that you have experienced different workplace cultures, management styles, team structures, customers, systems, machines, deadlines and daily tasks. Wow! Think about the skills and knowledge you have gained by having had to pick things up quickly, adapting and organizing yourself to manage multiple simultaneous professional and personal activities. These are the scenarios that help you develop resilience and the skills companies value.</p> <p>A unique challenge of your work history, however, is connecting the dots on your résumé so that you paint a picture of a person who is been actively engaged in work/training. Here is an approach that will help you tell your story effectively to prospective employers.</p>	10 minutes

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities			Facilitator Notes
Skills Practice	PowerPoint presentation	Ask participants to “break it down”: start with the work and life experiences that you have learned the most from. There will always be threads that join unrelated jobs or other experiences. It usually comes down to three things: the tasks you had to do, the skills you used to complete those tasks, and the personality traits you brought to or developed for each.			15 minutes
	Life Experience and Employment worksheet				
	Lived Experience as Employable Skills worksheet	Step 1: Life Event	Step 2: Learning/ Observations TASKS to move forward...	Step 3: Skills, characteristics, attributes	
	Paper Pens/pencils	Got let go from a job	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I learned that field was not right for me</li> <li>Team dynamics; what is good for some is not good for others; learning the importance of a positive work environment</li> <li>Education does not equal success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adaptable</li> <li>Work Ethic</li> <li>Willpower</li> </ul>	

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Skills Application	<p>PowerPoint presentation</p> <p>Copy of résumé (optional)</p>	<p>The facilitator should instruct participants: Once you have written down your notes, you will likely see some emerging patterns and themes. To help you organize your achievements, ask yourself the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which tasks, skills and traits are repeated?</li> <li>• Which skills have improved the most, and which did you enjoy the most?</li> <li>• Where do you notice important knowledge and/or experience gaps?</li> </ul> <p>Have participants discuss these questions as a group or as partners, depending on the available time/size of the group.</p> <p>(*To add to the discussion, ask participants: What are some concrete steps that you could take or have taken to improve on the repeated patterns and themes?)</p> <p>If time permits: To participants: Make a list of recurring skills, tasks and/or traits and put them into your résumé under “Highlights of Qualifications” section. Here is what you might write based on the previous example:</p> <p>HIGHLIGHT OF QUALIFICATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five years of experience researching and planning a complex long-distance sailing voyage</li> <li>• Exceptional listening, interviewing and persuasion skills in both corporate and private sectors</li> <li>• Open-minded, creative, friendly and skilled at developing rapport</li> <li>• Proven ability to create results on limited budgets</li> </ul> <p>Moving Forward with Confidence and Clarity: Through this strategy, you can present yourself with greater confidence and clarity. Taking time to track your career achievements, experience and skills on a regular basis will also help you pay closer attention to the tasks, skills and traits you most enjoy and those you wish to develop. Remember: your ability to adapt to change demonstrates the qualities companies need in today’s world, so highlight this skill in your new-and-improved résumé.</p>	10 minutes



Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Evaluation	Evaluation form  Pens/pencils	Written questionnaire to be provided at the end of the session: <i>Do I feel there is a connection between my lived experience and my employable skills?</i>  <i>Name a highlight from the session.</i> <i>What did you like, what did you not like?</i>  The facilitator should request written feedback on both the workshop and the overall experience.	5 minutes

## FACILITATOR NOTES

The facilitator should complete the activities and/or explore examples for each activity before delivering the workshop, in order to support the group in identifying/recognizing relevant experiences and skills.

The facilitator should provide support and guidance for participants who may have to re-evaluate employment goals based on Labour Market Information (LMI) and/or employment needs, values, and/or intersectional employment barriers.

## REFERENCES

Working Well Together Training and Technical Assistance Centre. "Toolkit for Employing Individuals with Lived Experience Within the Public Mental Health Workforce." 2014. [https://children.wi.gov/Documents/wwt\\_toolkit\\_final\\_6-10-14.pdf](https://children.wi.gov/Documents/wwt_toolkit_final_6-10-14.pdf)

May, Emily. "What Are Transferrable Skills and Why Are They Important?" Niagara Institute, February 18, 2021. <https://www.niagarainstitute.com/blog/what-are-transferable-skills>

Zaruba, D. "How to Build a Résumé When Your Work Experience is Varied." YWCA Metro Vancouver, 2015. <https://ywcavan.org/blog/2015/12/how-build-resume-when-your-work-experience-varied>

*"Thanks so much for this opportunity. The program is over but not the lessons learned. I have met wonderful women with superb experiences that will help me to succeed in my project, as I am equipped with several new bases in the management of projects. I was able to have several interesting connections and above all I explored the community of New Brunswick despite being in another country [at the time], which removed several barriers that I had in my head. Thank you for giving me this chance."*  
(YWCA MONCTON Participant)

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## 2.5 YWCA Montreal/Y des femmes de Montréal, Quebec

### Responding to Change

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**Lesson Time:**  
1.5-2 hours  
(excluding breaks)

This learning module was delivered by YWCA Montreal/Y des femmes de Montréal, Quebec as part of the curriculum of **Women's Work Integration Program (Femmes vers l'emploi)**, which was the program documented for Phase Three of the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures (BSF) project.

For our **Women's Work Integration Program**, implementing a lesson on change was vital. Change will forever be in our lives, and learning to live and cope with it is important. This lesson allows participants to find common ground, in the sense that they are all choosing to leave their homes to change themselves professionally. Some choose this change, whereas others may have had to make this change due to altered livelihood circumstances.

Although many of our participants come to our program to grow professionally and personally, some women find it hard to leave the "stay-at-home life" because they have been a pillar for their families and feel bad about leaving that role. The program's aim is for participants to gain more self-direction and motivation, and have an opportunity to develop their decision-making skills. By learning to welcome change, they can feel stronger in themselves and can better understand the impetus to grow in new directions. While change can be scary, it can also be positive.

Our participants often experience low self-esteem, and have trouble standing up for themselves. In keeping with the **YWCA Montreal/Y des femmes de Montréal, Quebec** mission, we chose to work on this aspect of emotional intelligence for a variety of reasons: to encourage discussion about rights and boundaries; to support participants in managing stress and balancing life challenges; to inspire; and to create and strengthen mutual understanding, respect and empathy.

*"Change is inevitable. Sometimes it can be positive—business growth or a pay raise. At other times it can be painful—losing your job or a personal loss.*

*"Often the hardest changes to understand and adjust to are the ones that are unexpected and out of our control—a recession, a global pandemic or a major disaster, for example. Changes of this magnitude can be difficult to come to terms with, but you will often find that your experience of them can be made better or worse depending on your reaction and your attitude."*

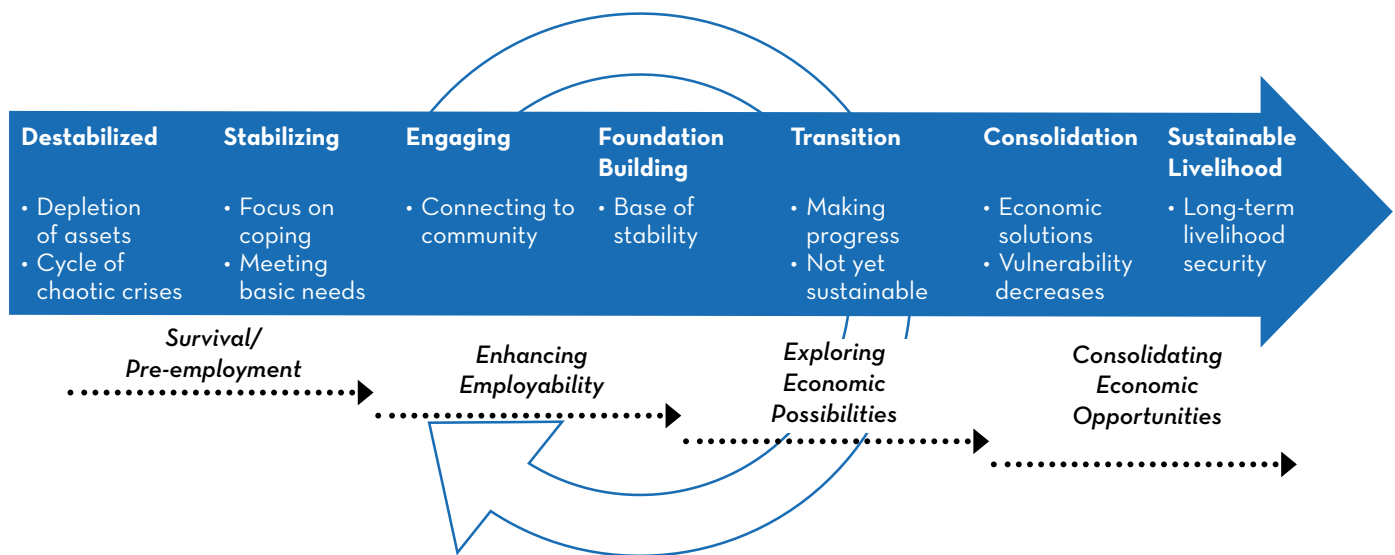
(The Mind Tools Content Team)

YWCA BUILDING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES MODEL



This workshop falls within the **Essential Skills & Employability Skills Training** component.

## STAGES OF LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT



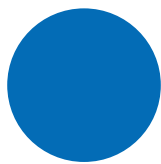
With permission of Sustainable Livelihoods Canada

This workshop falls mainly into the **Enhancing Employability** stage of livelihood development but is relevant to any of the stages along the continuum.

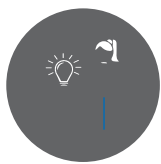
## ESSENTIAL SKILLS INTEGRATED INTO THIS LESSON PLAN



### EMERGING LABOUR MARKET SKILLS INTEGRATED INTO THIS LESSON PLAN



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE



ENTREPRENEURIAL APPROACH



FLEXIBLE/ADAPTABLE DIGITAL SKILLS



MOTIVATION AND SELF-DIRECTION

### YWCA MONTREAL/Y DES FEMMES DE MONTRÉAL, WOMEN'S WORK INTEGRATION PROGRAM (FEMMES VERS L'EMPLOI)

#### About the Association

Our mission is “Building together a better future for girls, women and their families,” and our Theory of Change is grounded in a holistic approach to the lives of women and girls, with a focus on building their pathways to better, more sustainable futures. Our Association offers multiple employment programs adapted to serve the diverse range of clients who enter through our doors. We know they come from different walks of life, and we are constantly striving to ensure that we have something to suit each client's needs. Working from a holistic approach, our services are designed to offer all of our clients a safe space to grow not only professionally but also personally.

#### Demographic Focus of the Program

Our program is open to women and gender diverse people from across the Island of Montreal. Our clientele base includes recent immigrants, single mothers, and family caregivers who are either without income or receiving social assistance. The typical participant has been socially isolated due to various life circumstances. Overall, our target audience for the program is women who have not worked for quite some time.

#### Our Local Context

The majority of our clients for the **Women's Work Integration Program** are immigrant women. We have seen a shift over the last couple of years in the type of immigrant population we serve. We still have a large group of newly arrived immigrants (those who have been in Canada less than five years), but the majority of our immigrant clientele have been in Canada between five and ten years, and have had little to no Canadian work experience. Over the past several years, we have also noticed an increase in the age of the average participant. Given these client characteristics, and put in the context of a post-pandemic bilingual city, strong language and digital literacy skills continue to be of the utmost importance to their success.

### PROGRAM OUTLINE

#### Program Purpose

The format of our **Women's Work Integration Program** was designed strategically to help women gain the courage to share their stories through group career counselling and job search strategies. Participants most often come for help citing low self-esteem, and we work with them to help them recognize and appreciate their skills, knowledge, values and experience. Our workshops have been adapted to the YWCA Life Skills model, with a focus on emphasizing transferable skills and building participants' emotional intelligence. The aim is to enhance their capacities for motivation and self-direction, despite the barriers they continue to face. The support that group members offer each other is invaluable to this process.

## Program Description

The **Women's Work Integration Program (WWIP)** at **YWCA Montreal** is a 19-week employment preparatory program offered in both French and English that helps women find their path through online and in-class workshops tailored to their personal, social and professional development. Since the start of our collaboration with **YWCA Toronto's** BSF initiative, the program's content and structure has been reworked to follow the YWCA BSF model and YWCA Life Skills model. **YWCA Montreal/Y des femmes de Montréal** is featured for its promising practice of cross-program Life Skills integration in the Phase Three Compendium, Section 4. Essential Skills for Employment, with an emphasis on computer and literacy skills, were integrated into the program to ensure that women continuously develop their skills in order to build a competitive advantage for themselves in the labour market. Our program also focuses on teamwork and the creation of a safe/dynamic space. Learning to tell stories and "share the air" also allows for proper communication, and makes it more inviting for those afraid to speak up.

During the pandemic, we recognized a shift in the skills required for job readiness, which led us to update the program, to teach participants how they can adapt to change in difficult situations. Additionally, participants were given a newfound sense of confidence through the use of YWCA's BSF participant asset mapping workshops. They were able to draft an overview of existing strengths and identify how to develop new assets. After completing various skills development workshops, and overcoming barriers such as lack of self-confidence, program participants are encouraged to find internships in a field of their choice. From filmed interview simulations to quarterly follow-up sessions with participants, we support women in their search to find the right employment "fit" for them, as well as to benefit from great opportunities to build lasting peer relationships through the program.

## LESSON OUTLINE

### Lesson Description

This workshop is delivered within the first week of the **Women's Work Integration Program** and is designed to support participants in dealing with change. Often participants have been out of the workforce for some time, so starting a full-time program can be stressful. The workshop aims to help them find some stability while facing a rapidly changing world. As with all of our workshops, this one is delivered in-person.

### Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this learning module, participants will:

- **Develop** a better understanding of how to manage change in their lives;
- **Find** personal resources to help them address this new reality.

### Participant Prerequisites

An open mind and a willingness to participate.

### Required Materials

- Pen/pencil
- Paper
- Whiteboard and markers

### Facilitator Resources

PowerPoint presentation  
Responding to Change worksheet

### Lesson Time

Approx. 1.5-2 hours (excluding breaks)

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Goals	PowerPoint presentation (used throughout—could be printed, excluding facilitator notes, if Internet is not accessible)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify some of the skills we need to manage change in a rapidly changing world.</li> <li>To look at some techniques/strategies that can help us reduce the overstimulation and anxiety that often comes with change.</li> </ul>	10–15 minutes  If there is no access to Internet for participants, the facilitator can write the goals on the Whiteboard
Rationale	PowerPoint presentation	The aim of this lesson is to support participants in gaining a better understanding of how change can affect us; and to identify personal resources to make it easier to deal with new realities.	10 minutes  If there is no access to Internet for participants, the facilitator can use the Whiteboard
Warm-up	PowerPoint presentation  Whiteboard and markers	Ask participants to think back to the world in which their grandparents, their parents and they grew up. What changes have taken place—in values, technology, communications, governments, countries, travel, etc.—since those days?  Have participants share their answers with the whole group. Allow time for discussion.  Write the word “CHANGE” on the board (or on a PowerPoint slide) and record participants’ responses in a random order around the word.	15 minutes
Stimulus		Reflect: Ask participants to think of a specific change that they feel was a turning point in their lives, and that they feel comfortable sharing with the group.  Divide the larger group into smaller even-sized groups and ask them to share these significant changes in their lives with their respective groups.	15 minutes  Leave the question projected



Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Evocation		<p>Share:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Did you initiate this change or did someone else?</li> <li>2. What were your immediate reactions to this change?</li> <li>3. What did you do about this change at first? Then later?</li> <li>4. In what ways were you satisfied/not satisfied with how you responded to this change?</li> <li>5. In what ways did the change alter your life?</li> </ol>	10-20 minutes
<b>BREAK 10 minutes (optional)</b>			
Objective Inquiry	<p>PowerPoint presentation</p> <p>Responding to Change worksheet</p> <p>Pen/pencils</p> <p>Paper</p>	<p>Managing Change:</p> <p>We know that when we are asked to change again and again, the physical and psychological reactions to this overstimulation can put our adaptive capacities under great strain. All change produces stress and carries with it a physical and emotional price tag. The more radical the change, the steeper the price and the more overstimulated we may feel.</p> <p>Overstimulation can occur on at least three levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the sensory—e.g., “too much noise!”</li> <li>• the cognitive—e.g., “too much information to digest!”</li> <li>• the decisional—e.g., “too many factors to think about, to make a decision!”</li> </ul> <p>In order to help us function, each of us has developed strategies or techniques to lower our level of stimulation when we feel uncomfortably close to the limits of our adaptive range. We use these tactics every day, often unconsciously.</p> <p>By examining how we respond to overstimulation, we can learn ways of consciously influencing change.</p> <p>By becoming more aware of these strategies, we can increase their effectiveness.</p> <p>We can begin by using these strategies to manage smaller changes in our lives; then we can expand the same strategies consciously to the larger changes in our life experience.</p> <p>Each of us needs both “roots and wings.” While our roots may be transplanted from time to time, without them we would be continually blowing in the wind with no sense of our own selves.</p>	5-10 minutes

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
(continued)		<p>At one extreme is the person who sees all change as a threat, and actively resists change without reflecting. At the other extreme is the person who enthusiastically embraces all change without reflecting.</p> <p>Both are reacting to change, rather than examining and directing the change in light of their own needs and abilities.</p> <p>Identifying Our Personal Stability Zones: Our stability zones, or “roots,” give us the space, time and structure to help us deal with change and initiate our own responses to it.</p>	
Skills Practice	<p>PowerPoint presentation</p> <p>Pen/pencils</p> <p>Paper</p>	<p>The facilitator should ask participants to return to their smaller groups, and encourage them to identify their own personal stability zones.</p> <p>Ask someone in each group to record these responses on a sheet of paper. The zones:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may be long-term relationships with people, places, objects;</li> <li>• may be personal rituals or beliefs; and,</li> <li>• are most likely relationships which are carefully maintained despite all kinds of change.</li> </ul> <p>Ask participants to consider the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In what ways do your personal stability zones work for you?</li> <li>• In what ways does carefully avoiding change in some areas help you manage change in other areas of your life?</li> <li>• Do you feel that all your personal stability zones still work for you, or have some become less meaningful in your present-day life?</li> <li>• What are some ways to develop stability zones that will work better for you?</li> </ul> <p>Ask each group to share their answers with the larger group.</p>	20 minutes

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
<b>Skills Application</b>	PowerPoint presentation  Pen/pencils  Paper	<p>Allow participants to take a few minutes on their own to identify and develop their own strategies to reduce overstimulation, as well to establish their personal stability zones.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What have they done in the past that worked?</li> <li>• What can they do in the future?</li> </ul> <p>Ask them to record their answers. These reflections may help them when faced with an unexpected change, and also when planning a change.</p> <p>Encourage those who are interested to share with the group.</p>	5-10 minutes
<b>Evaluation</b>		<p>Ask participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is your biggest takeaway learning from this workshop?</li> <li>• How might you apply this learning to your day-to-day life?</li> </ul>	<p>10 minutes</p> <p>The facilitator should write down participant responses, as part of the lesson evaluation.</p>

## FACILITATOR NOTES

- Encourage participants to share their stories and perspectives.
- Create a safe and inclusive space so that each individual feels like a part of the group, and is comfortable to participate in and share with the group.
- Allow participants to engage at their own comfort level in terms of sharing.

*“As a 50 something woman trying to find herself after devoting years to everyone, I am grateful to have spent the last few months with this organization no, with its people. My confidence returned and new opportunities are on the horizon. I thank you all from the bottom of my heart.”*

**(YWCA MONTREAL/Y DES FEMMES Participant)**

## REFERENCES

Altman, S. *Discovering Life Skills, Volume 3 (2nd ed.)*. Toronto, ON: YWCA Toronto, 1998.

The Mind Tools Content Team. “Coping with Change: Facing Fear and the ‘New Normal.’” Mind Tools.  
<https://www.mindtools.com/amgqesi/coping-with-change>



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## 2.6 YWCA Muskoka, Ontario

### Celebrating Anger

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**Lesson Time:**  
**2 hours**  
(excluding breaks)

This learning module was delivered by YWCA Muskoka as part of the curriculum of **Women Thriving**, which was the program documented for Phase Three of the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures (BSF) project.

This lesson plan can be helpful to anyone who needs to be reminded that anger is not a “bad” emotion. Anger is an emotion and can be a very healthy catalyst for change if we learn how to use it in a healthy way. We implemented this lesson as part of the **Women Thriving** program because the emotion of anger can be misunderstood and poorly expressed, which in turn can impact lives negatively. Anger may lead to a person’s inability to keep a job due to stress or difficulty in expressing their needs and concerns within the workplace. This can eventually lead to a breakdown of one’s well-being.

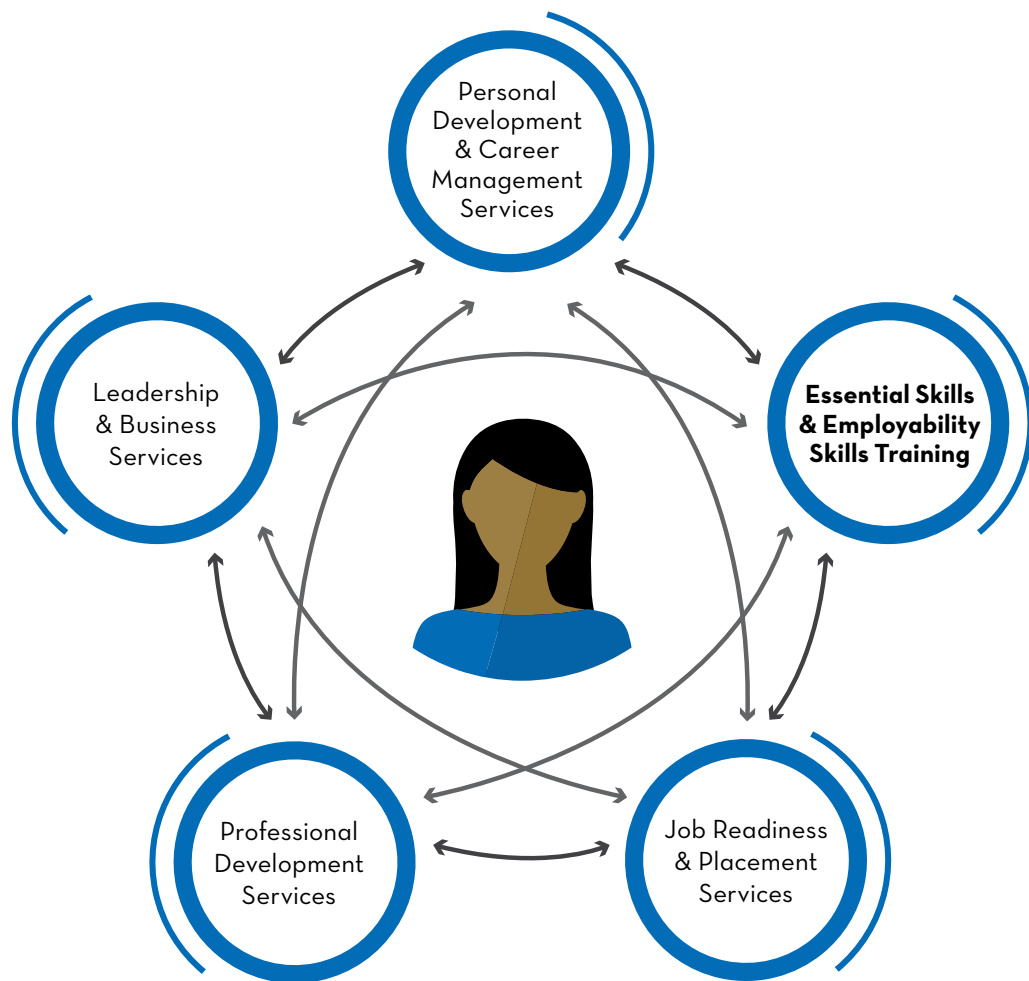
The aim of this lesson is to convey to participants that anger is to be celebrated because it is a signal that something is not working for us and that it is okay to speak up for ourselves and take action and do something about it.

This aspect of emotional intelligence is important in the workplace because it helps us to reason, perceive, understand, and manage our own emotions, as well as have empathy for the people we work with. There are many reasons for a focus on anger: when we manage our anger and work with it, we improve our communication skills, reduce stress and distraction, and are able to be more productive and positive—all of which helps to build strong relationships both in and outside of the workplace.

*“[T]he red-hot emotion has a positive side, say psychologists who study anger. In studies and in clinical work, they find anger can help clarify relationship problems, clinch business deals, fuel political agendas and give people a sense of control during uncertain times. More globally, they note, it can spur an entire culture to change for the better, as witnessed by the civil rights movement of the 1960s and the earlier women’s suffrage movement.... While there is no one definition of constructive anger—experts say it varies according to situation and context—psychologists are examining how its use can aid intimate relationships, work interactions and political expressions...”*

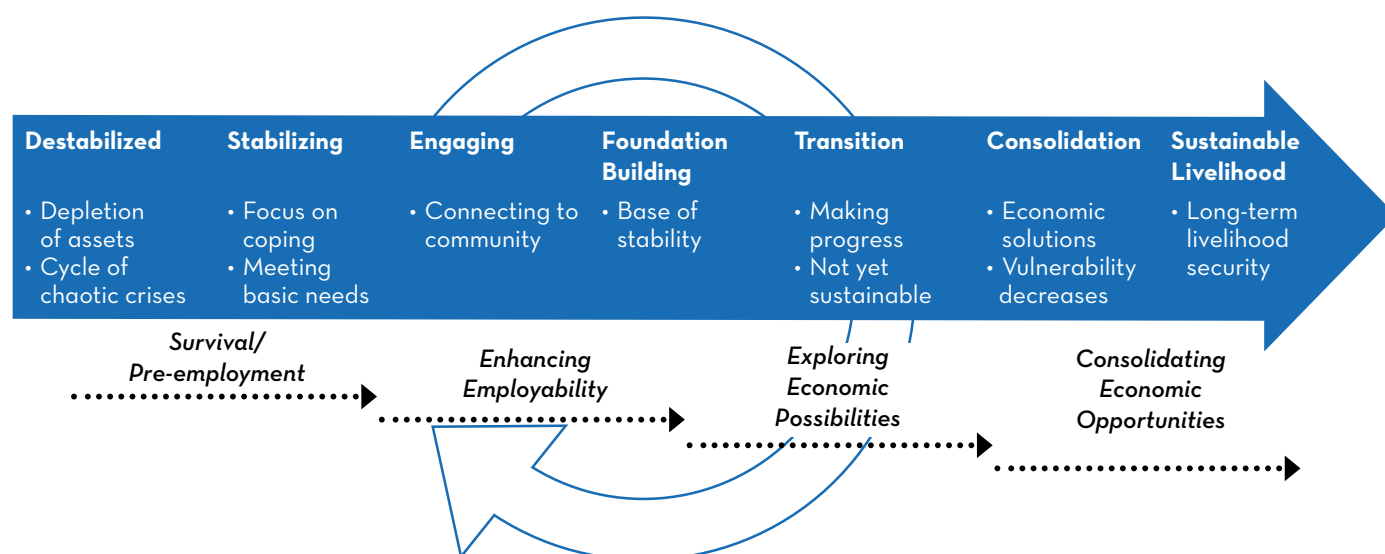
(DeAngelis, 2003)

YWCA BUILDING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES MODEL



This lesson plan falls within the **Essential Skills & Employability Skills Training** component, but it is also a useful foundation relevant to all of the other components in the model.

## STAGES OF LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT



With permission of Sustainable Livelihoods Canada

This lesson plan focuses on skills that are important at all stages of livelihood development. The women who come to our program can be at any stage of the livelihood continuum.

## ESSENTIAL SKILLS INTEGRATED INTO THIS LESSON PLAN



READING



WRITING



DOCUMENT  
USE



NUMERACY



COMPUTER  
USE



THINKING



ORAL  
COMMUNICATION



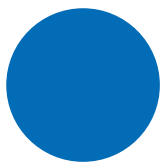
WORKING  
WITH OTHERS



CONTINUOUS  
LEARNING



## EMERGING LABOUR MARKET SKILLS INTEGRATED INTO THIS LESSON PLAN



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE



ENTREPRENEURIAL APPROACH



FLEXIBLE/ADAPTABLE DIGITAL SKILLS



MOTIVATION AND SELF-DIRECTION

## YWCA MUSKOKA, WOMEN THRIVING

### About the Association

Our vision is for a future in which all women and girls are thriving. We champion positive change through education, leadership and advocacy. We actively collaborate with community partners to challenge assumptions within our community and to further common goals of supporting and honouring women and gender diverse people, encouraging them to heal and grow. We believe that to have women leading and engaging in our communities plays a fundamental role in ensuring a healthy environment and future for generations to come.

### Demographic Focus of the Program

This program is targeted toward any women, be they un/underemployed, navigating transitions, starting a new business, or just looking to move forward on their personal journey. The women who come to our program are from a wide range of life circumstances. Most are over 50, and many are seeking to make changes in their lives. The aim is to send women into the workforce who are happier, healthier, and able to sustain a healthy relationship with their employers and work (whether volunteer or paid).

### Our Local Context

YWCA Muskoka serves a large geographical area with a very varied socio-economic picture, from wealthy households, to seasonal occupants and visitors, to local people living in poverty. Housing is an issue, as it is everywhere else in Ontario. Our economy and resulting employment patterns are highly seasonal. Transportation is a big challenge given the breadth of our service area, large parts of which are rural. The move to virtual program delivery during the pandemic was an advantage in this respect, even though we find in-person groups are best to reduce social isolation and build networks of support for participants. We hope to benefit from both in-person and virtual programming by exploring hybrid delivery.

## PROGRAM OUTLINE

### Program Purpose

With an emphasis on self-care, health and finding the leader within, the purpose of this program is to boost participants' confidence, so they can tackle the wide range of life and work challenges that they may face.

### Program Description

YWCA Muskoka's **Women Thriving** is a free ten-week program that brings women of all ages together for personal growth, social connections and self-care. It helps them to identify their strengths, build skills and knowledge, and develop strong networks. It also focuses on supporting them to manage transitions in life, such as: coming into a new community, starting a new job/business, becoming a sole support parent, beginning retirement, and/or longing to move forward with a personal journey. Teaching the soft skills—communication, creativity, problem solving, collaboration and adaptability, emotional intelligence, leadership—supports women to get to know themselves better, and therefore have the ability to lead their lives according to their own needs. When women meet their own needs, they have more capacity to move in the direction of sustainable futures for themselves and their families.

Program facilitators realized early on that the most significant barriers that participants face are stress and other emotional hurdles that can become easier to handle when there is more of a focus on emotional intelligence. To identify these barriers, the program commences with the YWCA BSF participant asset mapping tool, which allows participants to recognize their strengths and other aspects of life that require attention, as well as to outline the steps they need to take in order to achieve their goals. Additionally, the Personality Dimensions workshop helps participants understand their working styles and how they can collaborate with colleagues who may have different styles than theirs. This helps them learn how to respect and value both their own and others' workplace preferences, and also manage potential conflicts in the workplace.

We are now offering our program workshops on a flexible basis to accommodate participant needs, goals and schedules. One workshop, Money Mindset, explores how we can change the way we view money. Another, The Leader Within, introduces a new leadership model where the individual is at the core (see the Phase Three Compendium, Section 1.1.5). We also offer a workshop on motivation that integrates the Life Skills model and Lesson Plan (featured in Section 4 of the Phase Three Compendium as a promising practice for using the Life Skills model to explore emerging skills).

## LESSON OUTLINE

### Lesson Description

This lesson plan falls within the emerging labour market skills as an aspect of emotional intelligence—a skill crucial in everyday life, to maintaining and growing within a job, and to an individual's motivation and self-direction.

The lesson focuses on the topic of anger. Many of us have been taught that anger is a “bad” or unhealthy emotion. As a result, we may lack the tools to address our anger and use it to our advantage. Yet anger is not in itself bad; it is a natural emotion that arises when something is bothering us, and it can be a healthy stimulus for change. It can be a signal to us

that we should reflect upon the source of our anger, as part of taking care of ourselves and looking out for our own safety. Anger can also alert us to situations in which we feel that injustice may be occurring, whether real or perceived. The challenge is that if we are unable to understand our emotions and their impact on us and on others, we may have difficulty expressing them productively. This may lead to stress and even drama in the workplace that could affect our ability to keep a job.

In the lesson, we will explore why we experience anger, the difference between primary and secondary feelings, and how we can learn from and communicate our anger in personal and workplace situations. By identifying what makes us angry, we can better express our feelings when the emotion arises. Anyone from a young adult to a senior citizen can benefit from this lesson, which can be delivered in-person or virtually.

### Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this learning module, participants will:

- **Understand** that anger is to be celebrated because it is a signal of something bothering them;
- **Learn** to take time to explore what is creating their anger; and,
- **Identify** productive ways to respond to the emotion and find solutions to what is actually troubling them.

### Participant Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites other than an open mind to learning something new.

### Required Materials

- Flipchart and markers (or Whiteboard on Zoom)
- Pens/pencils

### Facilitator Resources

- PowerPoint presentation
- Learning from Anger worksheet

### Lesson Time

2 hours (excluding breaks)

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Goals	PowerPoint presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To explore what anger is, what causes anger, and to discover our triggers.</li> <li>To explore healthy ways of expressing and/or processing our anger in our personal and professional lives.</li> </ul>	1 minute
Rationale	PowerPoint presentation	<p>The problem is that we have often been told anger is “bad” and may have not been given the resources or tools to process and express this emotion productively.</p> <p>Anger is a natural human emotion that we all experience. It can actually be a healthy stimulus for change.</p>	2 minutes
Warm-Up	PowerPoint presentation	<p>Ask participants to think of a situation in which they felt angry (at work or in their personal life).</p> <p>Have participants note their experience of anger in terms of bodily sensations, thoughts, emotions, breathing, and impulses/behaviour.</p> <p>Ask participants: “How did the anger impact you and your behaviour? How did your anger impact those around you?”</p> <p>It is important to reflect on how anger is impacting us, and then look outside of ourselves to see how it has impacted those around us (based on how we typically behave during moments of anger—often not using our skills).</p>	<p>15 minutes</p> <p>(5 minutes for meditation, 10 minutes for inquiry)</p> <p>Be sure to ask participants to choose something that is not too triggering.</p> <p>It may help to suggest participants close their eyes and get in touch with the moment of anger, to feel the experience in their bodies.</p>

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Stimulus	Flipchart and markers, or Whiteboard on Zoom.	<p>Have participants split into small groups or pairs and discuss the following question: What situations in life and/or at work might trigger feelings of anger? Have them brainstorm ideas that would create anger for them.</p> <p>If they are struggling, supply examples of daily situations, such as being annoyed by drivers on the road, having to wait in line, or dealing with family members; or name some injustices at work that may occur, such as a boss speaking inappropriately to them.</p> <p>Give the small groups 3-5 minutes to brainstorm.</p> <p>When they return to the large group, encourage each pair to share what examples they came up with and to write them all on the flipchart or on the Zoom Whiteboard.</p> <p>Read through each example and ask participants to put their hands up to indicate if they have ever experienced the emotion of anger while in these situations. This process may evoke some laughter or stress; it is really important to show participants that anger is normal and they are not alone in how they may be reacting to situations.</p> <p>Express here that all of us experience many of these things, and that anger is a natural emotion.</p>	20 minutes

Lesson Component	Required Materials/ Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Evocation	PowerPoint presentation	<p>Ask participants to consider these four statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I feel anger, but I suppress it.</li> <li>2. I am never angry.</li> <li>3. I am very angry and it jumps out of me in inappropriate ways.</li> <li>4. I have a good relationship with anger and express it in healthy and supportive ways.</li> </ol> <p>Facilitate a discussion with participants who are willing to share where they stand on these statements. This should be a relaxed and honest conversation about how they deal with anger at present.</p> <p>Make sure to point out that if we know where we stand in terms of how we express our anger, we can learn how to express it more productively.</p> <p>In person, this exercise can be done as a sociometry. The facilitator can post each statement on a piece of paper in different parts of the room. You can then ask participants to get up and stand where they feel their relationship to anger is at this point in their life. From where they are standing around the room, participants can share (if comfortable) why they chose to stand where they are.</p> <p>If delivering the session online, the facilitator can read each statement to the class, and have participants raise their hands when one that resonates with them is read out loud. Each person can be given a chance to name what made them choose this category, or you can ask one person from each category to share, depending on how big the class is.</p>	20 minutes

<b>Lesson Component</b>	<b>Required Materials/Resources</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Facilitator Notes</b>
<b>Objective Inquiry</b>	PowerPoint presentation	<p>Here, we will explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What anger is</li> <li>• When anger becomes a problem</li> <li>• Primary feelings vs. secondary feelings</li> <li>• The Anger Iceberg</li> <li>• What can be done to manage stress</li> </ul> <p>The facilitator might note the connection between fear and anger (e.g., the fear of not being heard). Anger can be a sign of the “survival brain” kicking in.</p>	30 minutes
<b>Skills Practice</b>	PowerPoint presentation  Pens  Learning from Anger worksheet	<p>Learning from Anger:</p> <p>Ask participants to go back to the example they used from the warm-up at the beginning lesson and write it in the worksheet.</p> <p>Encourage participants to write out what/how they originally felt.</p> <p>Then, have them reframe the example and write out how they could learn from their anger.</p> <p>Have participants discuss in small groups or pairs responses to these questions.</p>	7 minutes
<b>Skills Application</b>	Learning from Anger worksheet	<p>Continue on worksheet:</p> <p>Encourage participants to reflect on what they have learned and record a personal goal for expressing their anger in healthier ways based on what they learned today</p>	10 minutes
<b>Evaluation</b>	PowerPoint presentation	<p>Ask the group:</p> <p>What was the most important thing you learned today?</p>	10 minutes  Make sure everyone answers this question before the lesson is over.

### REFERENCES

Canadian Mental Health Association, Newfoundland-Labrador. "Feelings Wheel: A Tool for Understanding Emotions." <https://legacy.camosun.ca/covid19/documents/camhelps/9-Feelings-Wheel-Handout-2019.pdf>

DeAngelis, Tori. "When anger's a plus." American Psychological Association, March 2003. <https://www.apa.org/monitor/mar03/whenanger>

EQI.org. "Anger." <https://eqi.org/anger.htm>

*"The program really helped to build my self confidence and gave me the knowledge that I am worthy of this new job that I have. It also gave me the tools to deal with stressful situations and not let stress get the better of me. The program was so important for maintaining my new job...in other jobs like this, I would have quit because it would have felt too stressful for me."*

**(YWCA MUSKOKA Participant)**



## 2.7 YWCA Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

### Boundaries = Personal Kindness

**Lesson Time:**  
1.5-2 hours  
(excluding breaks)

This learning module was delivered by YWCA Saskatoon as part of the curriculum of **Trade Journey**, which was the program documented for Phase Three of the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures (BSF) project.

While our **Trade Journey** program focuses on the pre-employment aspect of the Trades/Construction industry, it also takes a holistic approach to self-development. Through this lesson on self-awareness and the identification of boundaries, participants are encouraged to reflect on how boundaries allow us to clarify our needs, wants and values in relation to others. We explore how boundaries can empower us to prioritize ourselves and support us in making choices about how we want to be treated and how we use our time in ways that are right for us.

From our experience in delivering this program, we have learned that it is not a lack of skills that is responsible for the low representation of women in the construction trades. A number of more complex factors are involved, including issues around “soft skills” such as self-confidence and assertiveness. Boundaries help us stand up and speak up for ourselves while also respecting others. They enable us to sustain our emotional, physical and mental well-being in relationships, at home, and at work.

*“Some people feel the need to please others, often without realizing that by saying ‘yes’ to everything, they are also saying ‘no’ to something else that might be equally important to them. This can have negative effects on both your personal life and your career.*

*“Not being able to set healthy boundaries can be related to common issues like low self-esteem, needing approval from others, learned helplessness or the fear of being rejected or criticized....*

*“Boundaries create trust and build healthy relationships. Even when some people do not like what you do, they will likely still respect you for standing up for what you believe in. Boundaries also generate safety in relationships. When your privacy is respected, you are more likely to feel heard, validated and appreciated. But most of all, you are not taken for granted by either your loved ones or your colleagues and supervisors.”*

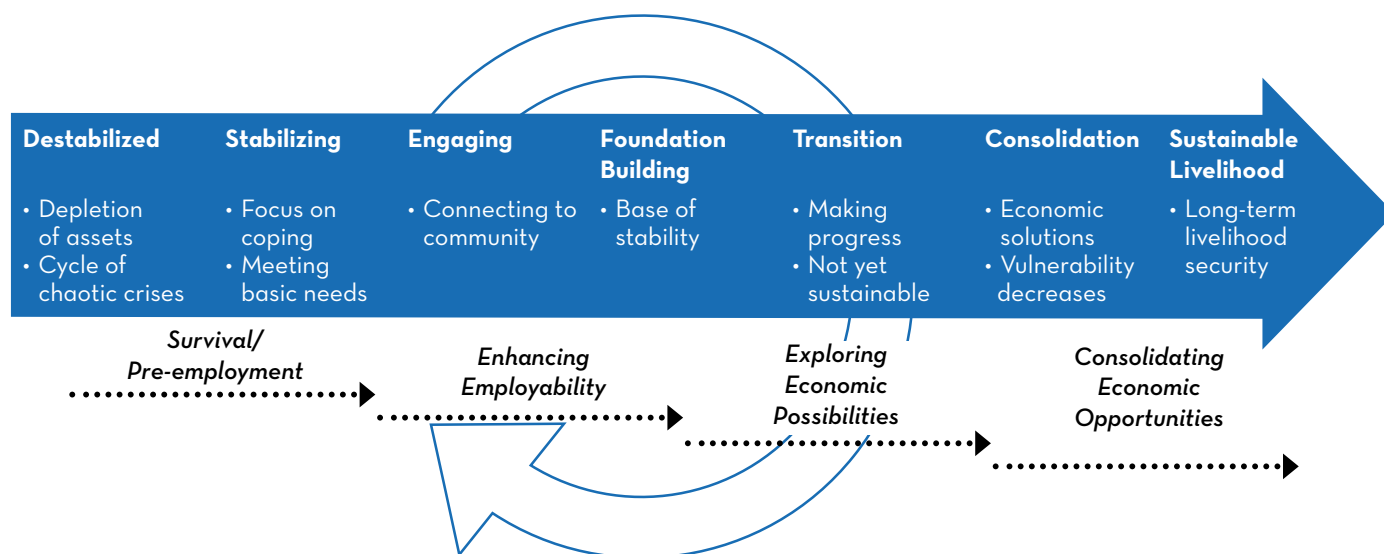
(Andrade, 2021)

YWCA BUILDING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES MODEL



This workshop falls into the **Essential Skills & Employability Skills Training** component, but it could also be useful for a general audience and is foundational to the other components of the BSF model.

## STAGES OF LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT



With permission of Sustainable Livelihoods Canada

This workshop falls mainly under the **Enhancing Employability** stage but is relevant at all stages of the livelihood development continuum.

## ESSENTIAL SKILLS INTEGRATED INTO THIS LESSON PLAN



READING



WRITING



DOCUMENT  
USE



NUMERACY



COMPUTER  
USE



THINKING



ORAL  
COMMUNICATION

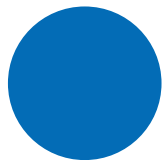


WORKING  
WITH OTHERS



CONTINUOUS  
LEARNING

### EMERGING LABOUR MARKET SKILLS INTEGRATED INTO THIS LESSON PLAN



EMOTIONAL  
INTELLIGENCE



ENTREPRENEURIAL  
APPROACH



FLEXIBLE/ADAPTABLE  
DIGITAL SKILLS



MOTIVATION AND  
SELF-DIRECTION

### YWCA SASKATOON, TRADE JOURNEY

#### About the Association

At **YWCA Saskatoon**, we honour our commitment to women's issues by providing services, programs and advocacy to advance reconciliation, independence, wellness and equal opportunities. Our employment and learning programs at the Employment & Learning Centre are an integral part of our program offerings. The **Trade Journey** program is one of our women-specific training programs at the Centre. Together with our other departmental programs and services, we are working to eliminate poverty, homelessness and violence for women and their families in our community.

A core strategy is to take a proactive approach to preventative programming. We strive to empower and equip all our clients to make long-lasting positive and sustainable changes in their lives. We offer a continuum of programs, from emergency services (emergency shelter), to basic life skills, to various targeted programs to assist them on their career and life paths. Every step is a step forward.

#### Our Local Context

According to Statistics Canada, Saskatoon's rate of unemployment is 4.2 percent, which is lower than Canada's national rate of 5.2 percent (2022). Certain demographic groups struggle inordinately to find and sustain employment, in particular Indigenous people, often due to essential skills gaps. In 2021, 15.9 percent of the city's population was comprised of Indigenous people. As the largest city in Saskatchewan, in the last year Saskatoon has seen a growth of 1.1 percent as a result of international migration. High rates of visible and invisible homelessness in our community are an ongoing issue. Program staff have noted recently the increased competition for trained "job-ready" candidates. At the same time, circumstances are harder for many of our participants, who may be dealing with issues of housing, childcare, the rising cost of living, and travel expenses. These often-intersecting challenges can make it extremely difficult for them to stay in and complete the program.

#### Demographic Focus of the Program

**Trade Journey** is designed for women aged 18 or over who like working with their hands. Some may already have experience in construction, renovation, mining or maintenance positions, while many others are new to and want to transition into a trades career. Our demographics include Indigenous and newcomer women, and youth coming out of high school. Trades are attractive to many people as a faster route toward a sustainable income.

### PROGRAM OUTLINE

#### Program Purpose

The **Trade Journey** program at **YWCA Saskatoon** was created for women who are transitioning into the trades career field or those who wish to enhance prior experiences in the fields of construction, renovation, mining or maintenance. We support women who are unemployed or underemployed, with little or no skills and training on their path toward a viable career. This may include working toward higher education through an apprenticeship. We aim to: help our participants break away from working for minimum wage; assist

newcomers in establishing themselves; and over the longer term, enable all participants to move from subsistence to self-sufficiency, and ultimately toward thriving. Our service-delivery model empowers participants to visualize career goals and set a self-directed path toward realizing them within a new “one-stop shop” designed by women, for women.

### Program Description

This 16-week program offers women the ability to experience trades, build confidence, and enhance the skills necessary to enter these traditionally male-dominated fields. The program takes a multi-faceted approach to supporting participants. Each component is designed to combine with the other parts of the program, culminating in a streamlined menu of: skills training and supports; life skills for success training; a hybrid learning environment; physical fitness training; job search training; support to obtain necessary certifications; and employer contributions such as work placements, mentorship, and other learning opportunities. **Trade Journey** was designed using an asset-based approach to women’s economic development. During this phase, we have been able to adapt the YWCA BSF asset mapping tools at both individual participant and program/organizational levels (featured as a promising practice in the Phase Three Compendium, Section 4).

We take a holistic approach at a range of levels: to build participants’ assets; to demonstrate the value of having women in non-traditional industries; to collaborate with women and employers, to mitigate barriers that influence one’s potential for success; and to create a network of partnerships among industry and community. Our team has also introduced new emerging skills modules for the **Trade Journey** curriculum, including: Active Listening, Critical Thinking, and Stress Management. Through experiential learning in contracted workshops and other training facilities, participants can recognize their strengths and determine which path(s) to pursue in their apprenticeship journey. Participants also develop new skills in safety, fitness and nutrition

while building valuable relationships to support their career journeys. Their skills are put to use during a three-week work placement, and they are provided with the necessary tools as they embark on their new careers. To ensure that we continue to follow current labour market demands, we collaborate closely with local employers, thereby giving recipients of the **Trade Journey** program a certified reference that provides them with a competitive advantage over other individuals seeking similar work opportunities. Program staff are also working to explore new collaborative community partnerships in the field of trades.

## LESSON OUTLINE

### Lesson Description

This lesson, designed for youth and adults, explores how setting boundaries enables us to sustain our emotional, physical and mental well-being in relationships, at home and at work. Boundaries allow us to clarify our needs, wants and values in relationships with others. They empower us to put a priority on ourselves, as well as to make choices about how we want to be treated and how we use our time in ways that are right for us.

Topics covered include: boundary definition; types of personal boundaries; what are healthy boundaries; the benefits of setting and maintaining healthy boundaries; cues to recognize when we need to set or reinforce our boundaries; guidelines to setting healthy boundaries; how to communicate both assertively and respectfully; how to back up boundaries with action; and situational examples of setting healthy boundaries. Participants will be practicing the emerging soft skills of motivation and self-direction, as they establish and reinforce boundaries with action. They will also be drawing on their emotional intelligence as they decide what is right for them as individuals, and as they improve their ability to set and maintain their own boundaries. The lesson can be delivered both in-person and virtually.

### Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this learning module, participants will:

- **Expand** their understanding of boundaries and the importance of having them
- **Recognize** within themselves when boundaries have potentially been crossed; and,
- **Practice and discuss** ways to improve their ability to set and honour their own boundaries.

### Participant Prerequisites

- A willingness to learn and participate

### Required Materials

- Google Jamboard
- Computers with Internet connection

### Facilitator Resources

- PowerPoint presentation
- Self-Awareness worksheet
- Boundaries Scenario worksheet
- Invading Personal Space in Public | Social Experiment (YouTube video)

### Lesson Time

1.5-2 hours (excluding breaks)





Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Goals	PowerPoint presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand our understanding of boundaries and the importance of having them;</li> <li>Recognize within ourselves when boundaries have potentially been crossed;</li> <li>Practice and discuss ways to improve our ability to set and honour our boundaries.</li> </ul>	5 minutes
Rationale	PowerPoint presentation	<p>Boundaries allow us to clarify our needs, wants, and values in relation to others. They empower us to prioritize ourselves and to make choices about how we want to be treated and how we use our time in ways that are best for us.</p> <p>Boundaries help us stand up and speak up for ourselves while also respecting others. They enable us to sustain our emotional, physical, and mental well-being in relationships, both at home and at work.</p>	5 minutes
Warm-up	Google Jamboard	<p>Ask participants to write three statements about themselves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two true</li> <li>One untrue</li> </ul> <p>Let us have some fun and guess which of each other's statements are true and untrue!</p>	10 minutes (depending on size of the class)
Stimulus	<p>Computer with Internet access</p> <p>YouTube video: Invading Personal Space in Public   Social Experiment</p>	Show video: <a href="#">Invading Personal Space in Public   Social Experiment</a> - YouTube	10 minutes
Evocation		<p>Facilitate a group discussion using the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What would be your first reaction if the woman in this video approached you this way?</li> <li>Did you notice any differences in people's reactions?</li> </ul>	35 minutes



Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Objective Inquiry	PowerPoint presentation	<p>What is a boundary?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Something that indicates or fixes a limit or extent; a line or an edge</li> </ul> <p>Types of personal boundaries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical—personal space, touch and privacy</li> <li>• Material—money and possessions</li> <li>• Emotional—feelings and responses</li> <li>• Sexual—touch, activity and choice of partner</li> <li>• Intellectual—thoughts, values and opinions</li> <li>• Time—how we use our time</li> </ul> <p>What are healthy personal boundaries?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An established set of limits over your physical and emotional well-being that you expect others to respect in their relationships with you</li> </ul> <p>What are the benefits of setting and maintaining healthy boundaries?</p> <p>To:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and honour important parts of our lives</li> <li>• Maintain our own identity and respect the identity of others</li> <li>• Increase our self-esteem and self-respect</li> <li>• Contribute to our own and others' overall well-being</li> <li>• Offer freedom from bad behaviour, fear or pain; reduce stress and anxiety</li> </ul> <p>Some cues to recognize when we need to set or reinforce our boundaries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeling uncomfortable about another person's behaviour</li> <li>• Feeling anger or resentment about a situation or toward another person</li> </ul> <p>Some guidelines for setting healthy boundaries:</p> <p>Plan Ahead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notice signs such as being low on energy, feeling butterflies in your stomach, wanting to cry</li> <li>• Reflect on what you are feeling, why it is important to you, and what needs to change</li> <li>• Identify where you need more space, self-respect, energy, or personal power; your words and timing</li> </ul>	20 minutes

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
(continued)		<p>Read to the group the WIN Formula:            “When you... (state behaviour), I feel... (state your feeling), I Need/Want... (specify what you want to change).”</p> <p>How to communicate both assertively and respectfully:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be direct, firm and gracious</li> <li>• Keep it simple—do not debate, defend or over-explain</li> <li>• Use confident body language—eye contact, a steady tone of voice and appropriate volume</li> <li>• Stay calm—avoid yelling or diminishing the other person’s needs</li> </ul> <p>Back up your boundary with action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow through—do what you say you will do</li> <li>• Seek support to stay strong and not give in</li> <li>• Remain steadfast so you can live your best life</li> </ul> <p>Situational examples of setting healthy boundaries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anger: “You may not continue to yell at me. If you do, I will leave the room and end this meeting.”</li> <li>• Buy Time: “I have a policy of not making snap decisions. I need time to think about and reflect on what I want to do. If you need an immediate answer, it will be no.”</li> <li>• Extra Commitments: “Although this is an important issue to me, I must decline your request for my help at this time.”</li> </ul>	

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Skill Practice	Self-Awareness worksheet	<p>Facilitator introduction: The first step to setting boundaries is self-awareness (pay attention to situations when you are low on energy, feel butterflies in your stomach, or want to cry). Identify where you need more space, self-respect, energy, and/or personal power. Another way to identify your boundaries is by completing the following sentences with at least three examples each:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. People may not_____. Examples: humiliate me in front of others; criticize me; go through my personal things.</li> <li>2. I have the right to ask for _____. Examples: privacy; more information about the medication before taking it; support.</li> <li>3. To protect my time and energy, it is okay to _____. Examples: change my mind; turn the ringer off on my phone; say no.</li> </ol> <p>Ask participants to complete the Self-Awareness worksheet—Individual Reflection. Review the completed worksheet. Begin by asking if anyone would like to share, welcoming a group discussion.</p>	15 minutes
Skill Application	Boundaries Scenario worksheet	<p>Have the group divide into pairs, review the scenarios provided in the worksheet, and then develop a statement in response that establishes a healthy personal boundary. Have everyone return to the main group to share and discuss these responses.</p>	10 minutes
Evaluation	PowerPoint presentation	<p>Restate the goals of the lesson and ask participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did we meet these goals today?</li> <li>• What did you find most useful about this session?</li> <li>• What is one thing that you learned about boundaries?</li> <li>• What is something you are still wondering about?</li> </ul>	10 minutes

## FACILITATOR NOTES

- Complete the skills practice and skills application ahead of delivery, in order to have a better understanding of the content and of your own personal boundaries.
- View the Invading Personal Space in Public I Social Experiment – YouTube video before presenting.
- Also, be prepared with some personal examples of when boundaries have been crossed and how you set them. Scenarios in the Skills Application can be customized according to your group.

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**YWCA Toronto.** “W.I.N Method: Life Skills Training Phase 1.” Professional Facilitators Resources.

*“This program has helped me create a safe place and bonds with people for a lifetime.”*  
(YWCA SASKATOON Participant)

*“Helped me land a job!”*  
(YWCA SASKATOON Participant)



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## 2.8 YWCA St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador

### What Does it Take to be an Entrepreneur?

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**Lesson Time:**  
**3.5–4 hours**  
(excluding breaks)

This learning module was delivered by YWCA St. John's as part of the curriculum of **LAUNCH Atlantic**, which was the program documented for Phase Three of the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures (BSF) project.

Entrepreneurial skills include “soft skills” that are becoming increasingly important for employment in today's job market, as well as for self-employment. Entrepreneurial skills are valuable skills for everyday life. We realized how useful it would be to have a workshop to discuss these skills, which many of our participants were already building on at **LAUNCH**.

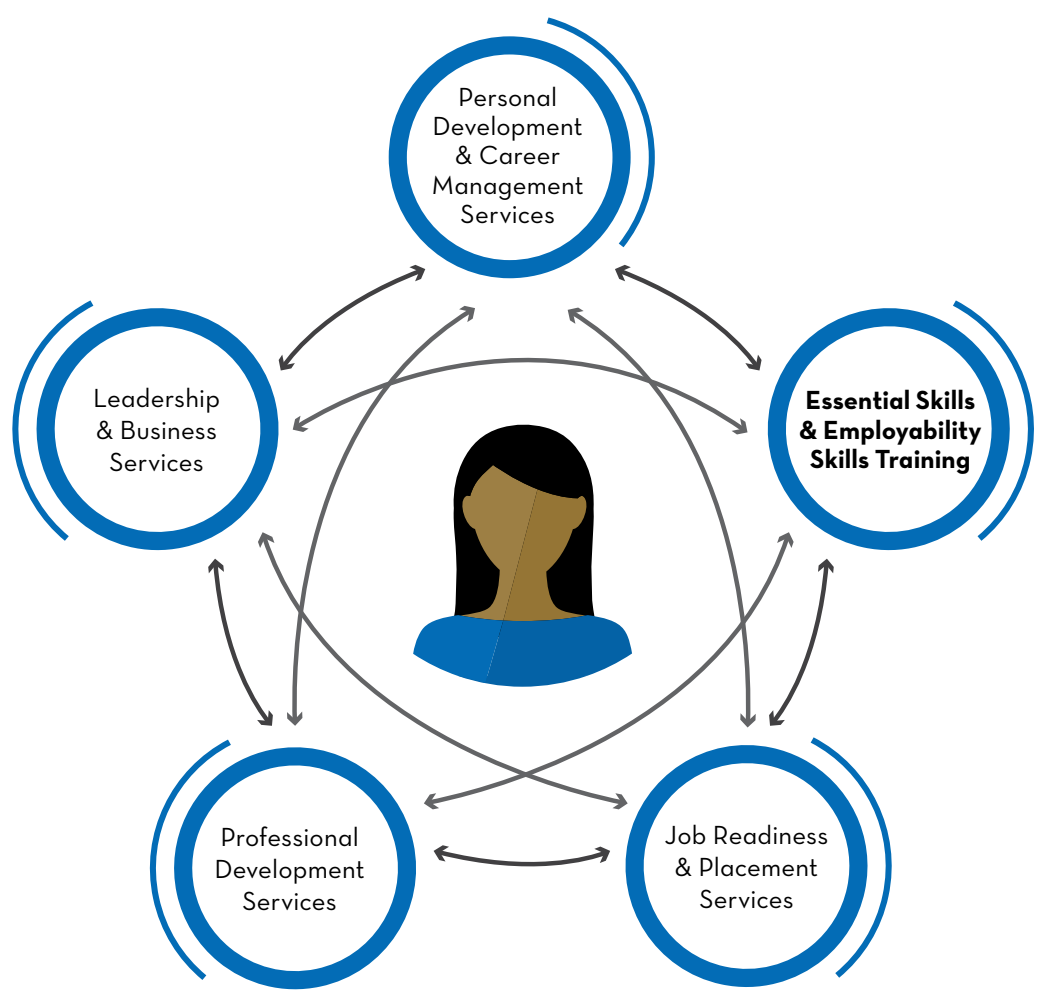
We also wanted to provide space for a creative conversation about taking initiative, which can be a challenging topic to cover in a purely employment-focused program. Through this workshop, we address the importance of initiative, adaptability and accountability, all while highlighting creativity and problem-solving skills that we already extensively explore in our program.

*“Both anecdotal and scientific evidence support the premise that entrepreneurs approach their work and life in a distinctive way. Entrepreneurial mindset is comprised of skills like initiative, adaptability, communication, critical thinking and problem solving—skills that help people overcome challenges, identify and make the most of opportunities, and succeed in a variety of settings....”*

*“Entrepreneurial mindset encompasses an array of essential 21st century skills. These skills help students succeed academically. They are highly valued by employers. They enable people to start and run new businesses, driving a vital economic engine. Furthermore, there is mounting evidence that these skills can be learned—and even transferred to meet new opportunities and challenges as the economy evolves.”*

(Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship)

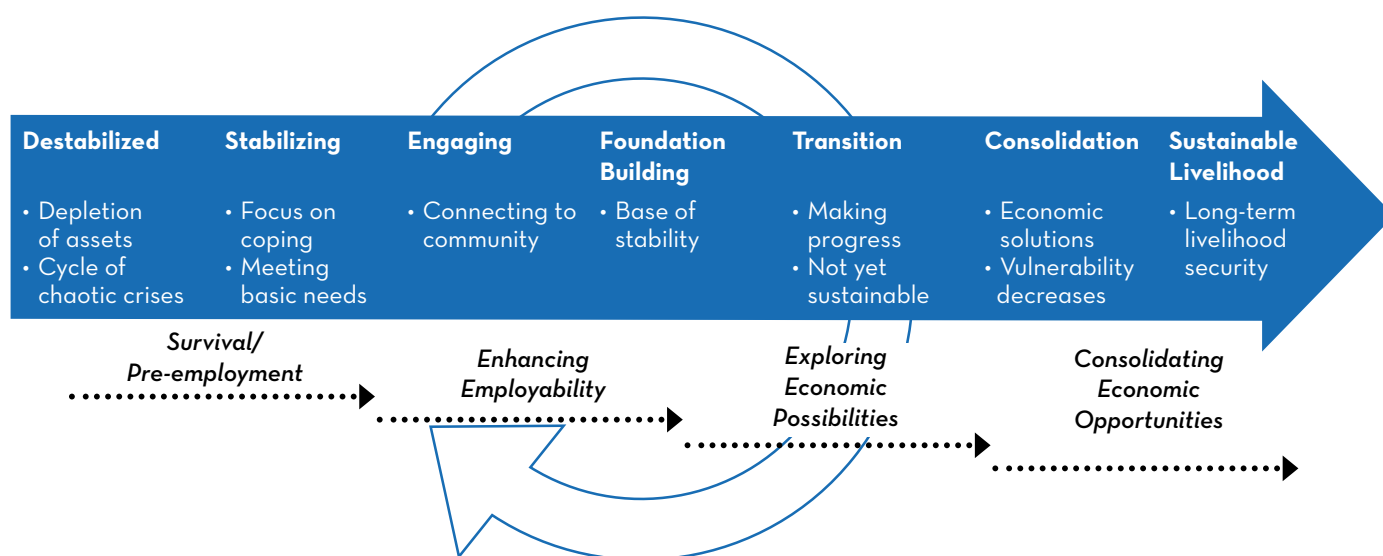
YWCA BUILDING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES MODEL



This workshop falls within the **Essential Skills & Employability Skills Training** component. It is also a very useful foundation for all of the other components of the BSF model.



## STAGES OF LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT



With permission of Sustainable Livelihoods Canada

This workshop falls within the **Pre-employment**, **Enhancing Employability** and **Exploring Economic Possibilities** stages of the livelihood continuum.

## ESSENTIAL SKILLS INTEGRATED INTO THIS LESSON PLAN



READING



WRITING



DOCUMENT  
USE



NUMERACY



COMPUTER  
USE



THINKING



ORAL  
COMMUNICATION

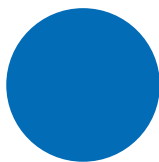


WORKING  
WITH OTHERS



CONTINUOUS  
LEARNING

## EMERGING LABOUR MARKET SKILLS INTEGRATED INTO THIS LESSON PLAN



EMOTIONAL  
INTELLIGENCE



ENTREPRENEURIAL  
APPROACH



FLEXIBLE/ADAPTABLE  
DIGITAL SKILLS



MOTIVATION AND  
SELF-DIRECTION

## YWCA ST. JOHN'S, LAUNCH ATLANTIC

### About the Association

In 2015, YWCA St. John's celebrated 90 years of empowering women and girls with programming that helps them develop socially, politically and professionally. By giving women a space to speak and learn about themselves and about the world, YWCA St. John's has been nurturing and mentoring young women since its inception in 1925. YWCA St. John's vision is a community where all women, girls, and gender diverse folks are safe, supported and empowered. Our work is rooted in our key values of equality, diversity, collaboration, respect, trust and balance.

All of our programs operate from a trauma-informed approach with a focus on supporting the leadership journeys of the individuals we work with. Our programs focus on supporting newcomer women; providing peer support and mentorship opportunities for LGBTQIA2+ newcomers; leadership and civic engagement opportunities for youth; and employment programs like **LAUNCH Atlantic**, which provide employability skills training and hands-on work experience through work placements. No matter the program or service being provided, we want to ensure that all of the women and gender diverse folks we work with feel supported and have the tools they need to reach their livelihood goals. To advance our mission and objectives, we are now part of the **LAUNCH Atlantic** capacity building partnership, which has been a great source of support and mutual learning about how to work with youth to address their employment training challenges and move them forward in their goals toward sustainable futures (see the Phase Three Compendium, Section 4).

### Demographic Focus of the Program

**LAUNCH Atlantic** is designed for young women and gender diverse youth aged 15-30 who are currently out of school, unemployed or underemployed.

### Our Local Context

The geography of the St. John's Metro Region is challenging. Our transportation system is very inaccessible, especially during the winter months. But even more of a challenge is that we have folks living just outside of the city centre (where it is more affordable to live) who have no access to a bus system. They must rely on cabs, which can cost upwards of 75-100 dollars a day to get them to most employment opportunities. So, without access to a vehicle, many young people are effectively unable to make it to their workplaces even when they are able to find a job. This obviously limits their search options even more.

On the upside, there are a lot of youth employment-focused programs in the community, and multiple agencies directly focused on supporting youth that provide housing and wraparound services. We are also a part of the Community Employment Collaboration, which strengthens our connection to other youth service and employment-focused agencies. We have seen a huge surge in the tech industry here and anticipate that many more jobs will open up in this sector. But they require post-secondary education, which many of our participants have not explored.

## PROGRAM OUTLINE

### Program Purpose

**LAUNCH** is an employment program designed to serve young women and gender diverse youth who are currently experiencing multiple barriers to employment. It aims to support all members of diverse and minority groups, as well as folks facing various barriers to employment (including but not limited to those who live with disabilities, are single parents, experience language barriers, are recent immigrants, have not completed high school, have a criminal record, etc.). While cohorts vary, according to one 2023 staff estimate, about 70 percent of participants are often living on extremely low incomes. This program is a great fit for folks who are in the preparation and action stages of change, and could also be very useful for those in the contemplation stage prior to deciding on their path forward.

### Program Description

**YWCA St. John's** programming is embedded in trauma-informed practice. Staff use a strengths perspective in workshops, allowing participants to improve their self-awareness. For instance, using the YWCA BSF asset mapping tool and activity, participants not only come to recognize their strengths but also to identify key areas for growth by reviewing short- and long-term S.M.A.R.T goals. They also build connections both with staff and as a group, for mutual support and learning.

For an overview of program components, see above, 2.1 **YWCA Halifax, LAUNCH Atlantic**. During the paid eight-week training before participants enter their paid 12-week work placements, the Program Coordinator and the Work Transition Coordinator work with them to address life concerns outside of employment, and to build upon topics including personal management, mindfulness and the nervous system, employment skills, values and qualities, job searching in the digital age, etc. After securing the paid placements, staff conduct check-ins with participants and provide ongoing support to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and to determine whether participants' confidence levels are increasing. By program end, the hope is that participants will have: learned more about the skills required by employers, increased their confidence in these skills, acquired experience demonstrating employability skills in a workplace, and gained new references to call upon in the future.

## LESSON OUTLINE

### Lesson Description

This lesson was designed for young women and gender diverse youth aged 16 to 30 in a pre-employability or employability skills program and who have limited knowledge of entrepreneurship—no previous knowledge is required. Entrepreneurial skills are “soft skills” that employers increasingly view as desirable for employment success.

The session covers the key steps required to explore the viability of a business idea as well as the general application of entrepreneurial skills, which are valuable foundational skills for everyday life and employment generally. Through the lesson, learners will: explore the definition of an entrepreneur; discuss entrepreneurial skills and practice putting them into action; and examine the relevance of these skills in all aspects of their lives. The lesson can be delivered both in-person and virtually.

### Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this learning module, participants will:

- **Understanding** of entrepreneurial skills and the relevance of these skills in their everyday lives (whether or not they have an interest in opening a business); and,
- **Gain** an increased sense of confidence in their ability to explore their entrepreneurial ideas.

### Participant Prerequisites

This workshop does reference soft skills, so a pre-existing understanding of these skills is needed.

### Required Materials

- Computer, projector, and screen for PowerPoint presentation and videos
- For virtual delivery: Jamboard (Google Drive) access link for participants
- For in-person delivery: Pens and pencils, Bristol board

### Facilitator Resources

- PowerPoint presentation
- **YWCA Toronto** Discovering Life Skills—Volume 5
- YouTube video – Boys & Girls Clubs of Canada
- Business Model Canvas template
- Image of Chairs

### Lesson Time

Approximately 3.5–4 hours (excluding breaks and a 1-hour panel discussion with entrepreneurs)



Lesson Component	Required Materials/ Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Goals	PowerPoint presentation	By the end of this session, participants will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explored what an entrepreneur is;</li> <li>• identified what entrepreneurial skills are;</li> <li>• practiced putting entrepreneurial skills into action; and,</li> <li>• discussed the relevance of entrepreneurial skills in all areas of our lives.</li> </ul>	10 minutes  Welcome & introduction to the workshop
Rationale	PowerPoint presentation	Entrepreneurial skills include “soft skills” that are becoming increasingly important for employment.	5 minutes
Warm-up	PowerPoint presentation  Chairs image Bristol board  <b>YWCA Toronto</b> Discovering Life Skills Volume 5: Problem Solving and Overcoming Blocks, Exercise 1, Brainstorming, p.104	Print and cut out pictures of chairs and a piece of Bristol board to help the group imagine and play with ideas. Break participants into groups of 3 or 4 and present them with the following scenario to discuss in their group for approximately 5 minutes:  <i>We are in a warehouse full of chairs. What are some of the things we could do with all of the chairs?</i>  Direct groups to elect a presenter, who will share their ideas with the larger group.  After all ideas have been shared, ask participants what skills they used to complete this activity.	15 minutes
Stimulus	PowerPoint presentation  YouTube video: Where good ideas come from	Ask participants to brainstorm, as a group, answers to the following two questions, noting answers on a board/flipchart: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is entrepreneurship?</li> <li>2. What are the skills of an entrepreneur?</li> </ol> Some examples of answers may include: creativity, leadership, problem-solving, time management, decision-making, teamwork, relationship-building, presentation skills, communication skills, resiliency, strategic thinking, self-esteem, and confidence.  Ask participants: How might these skills also play an important role in your everyday life, whether or not you are an entrepreneur?  Show video: <a href="#">Where Do Good Ideas Come From?</a> – YouTube	25 minutes  Make a connection to the previous activity (Warm-Up).

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Evocation	<p>PowerPoint presentation</p> <p>Article - 15 Trailblazing Women and How They Made the Internet</p>	<p>Ask the group what they took away from watching that video. What stood out to them? What did it tell them about entrepreneurship?</p> <p>Make a link to gender equity. Review this article with participants: <a href="#">15 Trailblazing Women and How They Made the Internet</a></p> <p>Discuss with the group: Women-identifying folks have played an important role in entrepreneurship and in the history of invention. But often their ideas have been taken and used by men without being given credit. Why does this matter?</p>	10 minutes
Objective Inquiry	PowerPoint presentation	<p>Now that we have a better sense of what entrepreneurs do and what skills they use, let us talk about some practical steps to becoming an entrepreneur!</p> <p>As we know from the earlier video, entrepreneurship starts with an idea. But where do you go from there?</p> <p>A good first step is to think through your idea with the following prompts: What need are you trying to fill? How can you communicate your product or service to others?</p> <p>Once you have your idea ready, you need to start exploring all of the components of your business. This can help you test your idea, to make sure the business is viable—meaning, something you can keep alive.</p> <p>Going through this process can help you create your business plan. Business plans are an essential component of starting a business. These plans are where you outline: your company and your values, who your customer is, how you will sell and market your business, how you will operate your business and keep customers coming back, and your finances and profitability.</p> <p>A great way to start the process of exploring all of the components of your business idea is by using a Business Model Canvas.</p>	<p>20 minutes</p> <p>As a supplementary tool, the facilitator can visit the following website with participants and view the embedded Prezi, which provides more information on the business plan.</p> <p><a href="#">Futurpreneur-Business Plan Essentials: A quick overview of what is needed</a></p>



Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
(continued)		<p>This Canvas is made up of nine key components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Value Proposition—a single clear and compelling message that states how you are unique/different and why you are worth paying attention to. How do you help your customers?</li> <li>2. Customer Segments—Who are your customers? Whom do you help?</li> <li>3. Channels—What are your paths to customers?</li> <li>4. Customer Relationships—How do you interact?</li> <li>5. Revenue Streams—What is your revenue model? How do you make money? What does your sales forecasting look like? What will you earn?</li> <li>6. Key Resources—What do you need to deliver/create/sell your product or service? Do you need people and/or equipment?</li> <li>7. Key Partners—Who helps you? What partnerships are required? Do you need suppliers?</li> <li>8. Key Activities—What is it that you do? Think about workshops, production, problem solving, etc.</li> <li>9. Cost Structure—What are the costs to run your business? Think about fixed and variable expenses, cost of the product/staff, etc.</li> </ol> <p>Following this process, participants will be engaged in a panel discussion with entrepreneurs or a presentation by an entrepreneur from the community. If this workshop is being delivered as a series of workshops, ask participants to brainstorm their questions for the panel in advance.</p> <p>Key questions for panelists could include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Why did you become an entrepreneur?</li> <li>2. What skills do you feel are the most important to becoming an entrepreneur?</li> <li>3. What were the biggest challenges of opening up your own businesses?</li> <li>4. What is one thing you would share with others who are considering being their own boss?</li> </ol>	1 hr



Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
<b>Skills Practice</b>	PowerPoint presentation  Business Model Canvas template (for in-person delivery, printed copies; for virtual delivery, editable PDF, Word document, or use Jamboard)	<p>Ask the group: If there were no barriers to starting your own business, what would your dream business idea be? Once they have come up with their idea, have them create a Business Model Canvas based on the idea and then present their Canvas to the group.</p> <p>Advise the group that they will be presenting their Canvas/business idea to the group (including guest speakers) in the style of an elevator pitch!</p> <p>What is an elevator pitch? Imagine a business owner is in an elevator, and a potential customer or investor hops into the same elevator. Their time together in the elevator is short, so the business owner has only that much time to try to sell their business/product/idea in a clear and persuasive way in the hopes of convincing this person to become a customer or to invest.</p> <p>Have fun with this! Suggest that where possible, pairs of participants go up and down the elevator to practice, bearing in mind how much time they would have in a real situation.</p>	<p>30–45 minutes</p> <p>This activity can be completed solo or in small teams. If individually, allow 30 minutes for independent work. If team-based, groups will need about 45 minutes to work together.</p>
<b>Skills Application</b>	PowerPoint presentation	<p>Ask participants the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How helpful did you find this activity?</li> <li>• What skills do you think you used in completing this activity?</li> <li>• Do you think the skills you used to complete this activity are important in employment more generally?</li> <li>• How can you use some of the skills more broadly in your life?</li> </ul>	15 minutes
<b>Evaluation</b>	PowerPoint presentation	<p>Ask the group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is one new thing you learned today?</li> </ul>	5 minutes

## FACILITATOR NOTES

As noted above, this workshop should include a one-hour panel presentation with a group of women and gender diverse entrepreneurs from the community, or a solo presentation by an entrepreneur. Although pre-developed questions for presenters are outlined above, when possible, it is recommended that participants help to develop the questions they wish to ask in advance. Participants should also be ready to showcase their elevator pitch ideas to the guest speakers.

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Duberman, Amanda. "15 Trailblazing Women and How They Made the Internet." 2014. [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/15-trailblazing-women-and\\_n\\_5654359](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/15-trailblazing-women-and_n_5654359)

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*"The LAUNCH program gave me a great opportunity to reflect and know more about myself. The work placement, class sessions, and also doing activities like asset mapping and a return to work action plan gave me good knowledge to identify my strengths, weaknesses, and the areas I need to work on. The financial aid given during the sessions and also complimentary cards helped me very much and gave me encouragement. The staff members are very helpful in assisting me all the way throughout the program. A special thanks to [staff] for following up and answering all my questions even after the program and for helping me to get a work placement in my field of education. Very big thanks to the whole LAUNCH team for this program. It has helped me to move forward in my life."*  
(YWCA ST. JOHN'S Participant)



## 2.9 YWCA Thompson, Manitoba

### Critical Thinking in Today's World

**Lesson Time:**  
2.5-3 hours  
(excluding breaks)

This learning module was delivered by YWCA Thompson as part of the curriculum of **Steps to Success**, which was the program documented for Phase Three of the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures (BSF) project.

Critical thinking is a skill vital for everyone to practice in both work and daily life, in order to sift through and evaluate the many sources of information available to us. The essence of critical thinking is that it is a self-directed activity which requires us to make a rational, unbiased analysis of a subject or a situation. To think critically means to step back and explore the evidence before accepting something as fact and/or coming to a decision. It can also involve considering the potential bias of our sources. The aim is to arrive at the best possible answer based on a process of careful research and reflection.

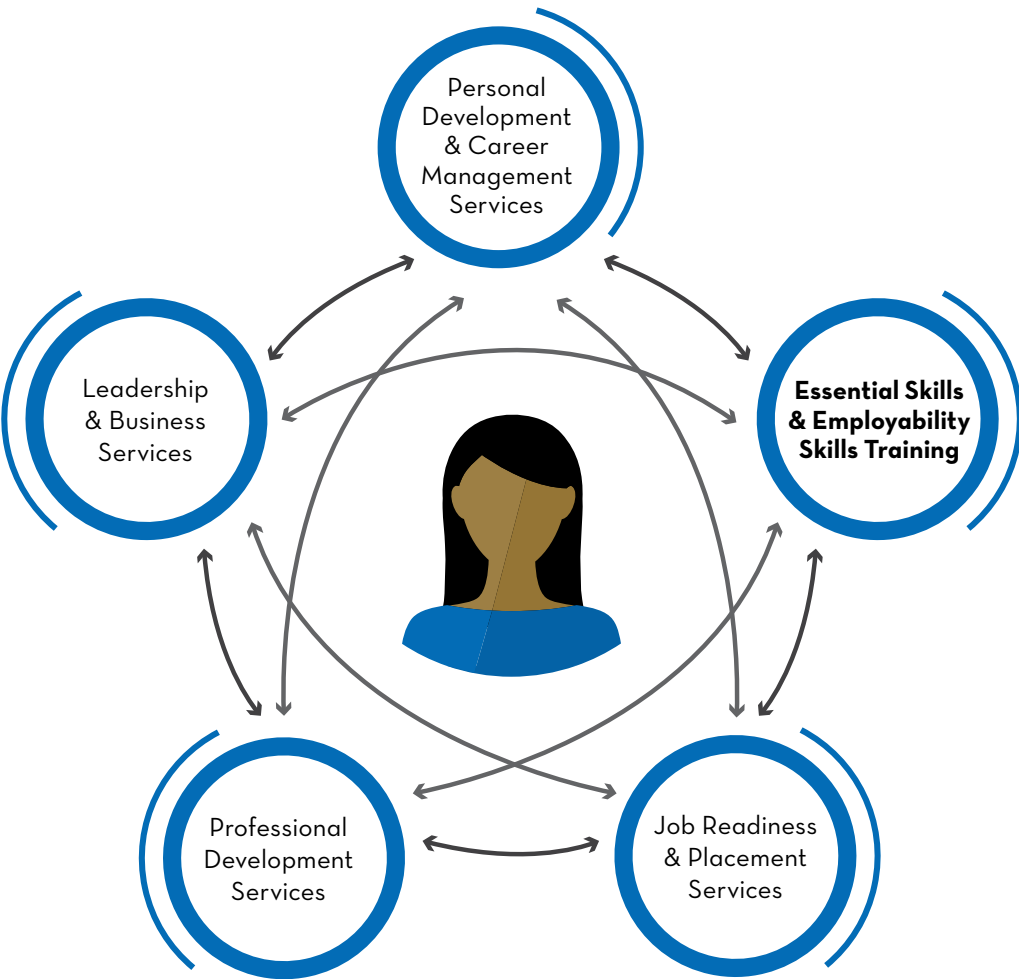
*Critical thinking means “a deliberate thought process,” and can be of use to everyone throughout their daily lives. (Sieck, 2021)*

*It is a valuable skill for all aspects of life. Since it benefits problem solving, creativity, and teamwork, it translates particularly well to the workplace, where it can distinguish someone as a valuable employee and leader.*

(Performance Management Consultants)

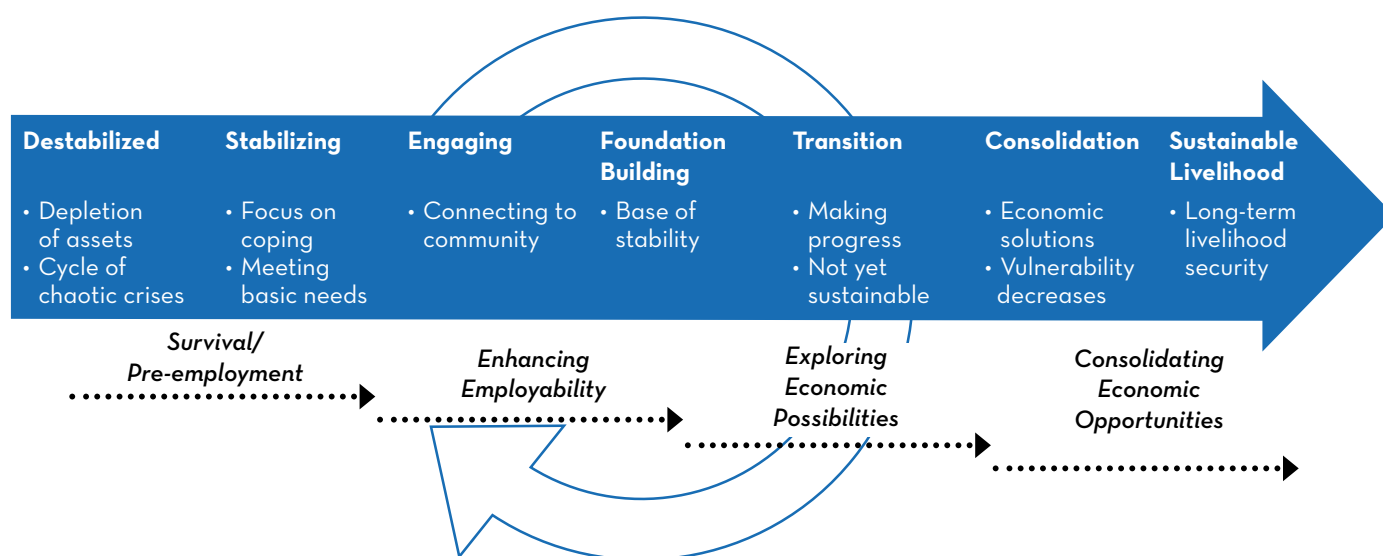


YWCA BUILDING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES MODEL



This workshop falls within the **Essential Skills & Employability Skills Training** component of the model. It aims to strengthen critical thinking skills as a foundation for building other essential skills for employment and as an important part of continuous lifelong learning, to support participants to advance in their work and life goals.

## STAGES OF LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT



With permission of Sustainable Livelihoods Canada

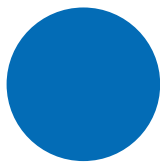
This pre-employment workshop falls within the **Enhancing Employability/Exploring Economic Possibilities** components.

## ESSENTIAL SKILLS INTEGRATED INTO THIS LESSON PLAN





### EMERGING LABOUR MARKET SKILLS INTEGRATED INTO THIS LESSON PLAN



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE



ENTREPRENEURIAL APPROACH



FLEXIBLE/ADAPTABLE DIGITAL SKILLS



MOTIVATION AND SELF-DIRECTION

### YWCA THOMPSON, STEPS TO SUCCESS

#### About our Association

In 2014, the **YWCA Thompson** mandate and strategic plan were revamped, moving from a focus on community building and education to a return to building equality for women and girls. We have several programs to support women in becoming more independent. The Transition Program provides housing and coaching for women who are homeless or threatened with homelessness; the Women's Centre provides counselling, clothing and toiletries; and the Assessment Centre provides academic assessments as well as career counselling. **Steps to Success** provides literacy and other essential skills training needed for the workplace, as well as other pre-employment supports and services.

#### Demographic Focus of the Program

Our main focus is on equity-seeking groups, and our clients are primarily Indigenous women from remote communities with multiple barriers to employment and who are seeking pre-employment skills. Although many of our participants have experienced hardship, they have developed the skill of great inner resilience. Our program works to draw upon these strengths, to help participants rebuild their belief in themselves, and to encourage them to set and move toward new goals.

#### Our Local Context

Thompson is a city of extremes. On the one end, we have more people than the provincial average earning over \$100,000, but we also have more people than the provincial average making less than \$40,000. As the "Hub of the North," Thompson attracts people from outlying communities who are looking to make a better life for themselves and their children. We have a large Indigenous population in Thompson, many of whom arrive lacking formal training. Most people we work with in the program face multiple intersecting barriers within their lives. Many have been affected by the residential school system and carry a burden of distrust toward the education system as a result. Within the Indigenous communities in Northern Manitoba, schools have been underfunded. Another serious issue that has major social and health repercussions for our communities is a shortage of decent affordable housing. COVID-19 had a huge impact on our Thompson community and on the remote communities in our region (for detail on **YWCA Thompson's** experience, see the Phase Three Compendium, Section 3.1).



## PROGRAM OUTLINE

### Program Purpose

This is a pre-employment program that focuses on building life skills and workplace essential skills to prepare clients for employment. Our clients are primarily Indigenous women often facing multiple barriers such as low literacy skills, low technology skills, or no access to technology. Many of our clients have no work experience. In response, the program offers adult literacy instruction separately, in addition to the pre-employment classes. While the program covers many essential skills—life skills and soft skills—it focuses on the skills identified by potential employers through the employer survey as their top priorities. These tend to be dependability/reliability, willingness to learn, and basic technology skills. The program aims not just to remedy essential skills gaps but also to help participants develop professional portfolio pieces in order to excel at a job-shadowing experience, and to secure work. The final outcome of securing employment after six months of program participation is the ideal goal.

### Program Description

**YWCA Thompson's Steps to Success** is normally an eight-week pre-employment program followed by a two-week job-shadowing component. It is designed to help individuals build the essential skills that support their professional and personal growth, and takes an asset-based approach to preparing its participants with the skills required to succeed in a competitive workforce. In the first eight weeks of the program, participants receive customized trainings focused on building their soft skills, adaptability, financial literacy, time management, etc. Since participants often face similar barriers to employment, peer support is strongly encouraged throughout the program, allowing them to build meaningful connections based on shared experiences. We provide a number of courses in “chunks,” such as basic computer skills, Microsoft Office software, essay writing, learner's permit preparation, grammar, goal setting, etc. Portfolio building is another important element used to help participants learn new skills or learn to recognize prior skills that they record on sheets, which become the building blocks of their skills-based résumés.

After the classroom component, participants connect with cooperating businesses for a two-week job-shadowing position. At the end of job shadowing, participants are expected to apply for available jobs. We incorporated the “Value of Volunteering” and “Job Search Techniques” Lesson Plans from the YWCA BSF Phase Two Toolkit. We have also continued to include the Sharing Circle Lesson Plan that we showcased in that Toolkit. Building connections with employers contributes greatly to the “Job Shadowing” feature of the program. Many participants also volunteered with local schools to gather more experience before entering the employment pool. All of the employers who worked with participants from our first few cohorts wanted us to send them more. Although participants are not always guaranteed a job afterwards, it gives them exposure to the different industries and workplaces. **YWCA Thompson's** “Scavenger Hunt” is featured in the Phase Three Compendium, Section 4, as a promising practice combining Skills for Success with employer engagement.

## LESSON OUTLINE

### Lesson Description

This lesson takes a fun and imaginative approach to exploring the importance of critical thinking skills in life and in work. The aim is for participants to expand and enhance their thinking skills to detect problems, identify possible solutions, and make informed decisions. Developing critical thinking skills is especially important for individuals who may be feeling “stuck” and afraid to make a major decision, or who tend to be reactive and make hasty decisions without thinking carefully through their options. The ability to think critically can also have a significant impact on a person's way of life and career choices and is therefore a necessary skill as part of one's lifelong learning journey. The workshop is presented in-class, with a PowerPoint presentation and a number of related activities.

### Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this learning module, participants will:

- **Understand** the importance of critical-thinking skills;
- **Discover** ways to improve their critical thinking; and,
- **Analyze** problems more logically and come up with better solutions.

### Participant Prerequisites

It is important that participants can read, write, and feel comfortable participating in a large group setting.

### Required Materials

- A bowl of Smarties (containing at least five for each participant in the group)
- Stationary (pens/pencils)
- Flipchart paper/markers
- Computer with Internet access

### Practitioner Resources

- PowerPoint presentation—Shipwreck! (Activity adapted from [Teach-This.com](https://www.teach-this.com) © 2021. Permission granted to reproduce for classroom use; see References, below.)
- Shipwreck worksheet A – List of Tools
- Shipwreck worksheet B – Challenge Cards
- Choices and Consequences worksheet
- What is Critical Thinking? (YouTube video)

### Lesson Time

2.5-3 hours depending on group size, excluding breaks

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
<b>Goals</b>	PowerPoint presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To explore what critical thinking is</li> <li>• To practice using this skill to solve problems and identify solutions</li> </ul>	5 minutes
<b>Rationale</b>	PowerPoint presentation	<p>Facilitate group discussion:</p> <p>What does “critical” mean? We often hear about people being critical or criticizing—as in, “Sara criticized the coach for not calling a time-out when her team was behind in the game.” Here, Sara is finding fault with something the coach did.</p> <p>What we are exploring in this workshop is NOT about “being critical” of something or someone.</p> <p>Critical thinking is about how to think carefully through an issue before we come to a decision.</p> <p>In our everyday lives, we are often faced with challenges and problems. Some may be less important while others can have a major impact on us, possibly over the long term.</p> <p>Critical thinking can help us make better decisions in these situations by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identifying problems as they arise;</li> <li>• seeking out reliable sources of information to help us make the best possible decisions;</li> <li>• thinking through our choices and weighing the “pros and cons”; and,</li> <li>• coming up with effective solutions.</li> </ul> <p>Critical thinking skills will also help us when looking for work that suits us best, as well as support us to be more successful in the workplace.</p>	5-10 minutes

Lesson Component	Required Materials/ Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Warm-up	<p>PowerPoint presentation</p> <p>Bowl of Smarties</p>	<p>Bowl of Smarties: This is a great activity for people to get to know each other better.</p> <p>The facilitator passes around a bowl of Smarties and asks participants to take up to FIVE, but not to eat them yet.</p> <p>After everyone in the group has helped themselves to some Smarties, ask each person to share one thing about themselves for every Smartie they have.</p> <p>Some ideas for sharing may include: What is your favourite food, secret talent, dream job, etc.</p>	15 minutes
Stimulus	PowerPoint presentation	<p>Introduction to Shipwreck: In this session, you will be going on an adventure together to practice your critical thinking skills.</p> <p>It is called Shipwreck!</p> <p>Depending on the size of the group, the facilitator should divide participants into pairs or groups of 3-4 people.</p> <p>Here is the scene: Imagine that you and your group are on a sailing ship. Suddenly the ship starts to sink really fast. After just a few minutes, the entire ship is underwater.</p> <p>Fortunately, everyone manages to survive. You spot an island not far away. You all start swimming toward it...</p>	10 minutes

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Evocation	PowerPoint presentation  Shipwreck worksheet A - List of Tools	<p>Shipwreck Part 1—Choosing the Tools to Survive</p> <p>While swimming to the island, you notice some items floating around in the water—tools that could be helpful to you on your island.</p> <p>On the Shipwreck worksheet A, there is a list of tools.</p> <p>Working with the pairs/smaller groups, the facilitator should ask participants to read the list and then use their judgement to choose FOUR TOOLS per group that they think might help them to survive on their island. The groups can pick any of the same tools.</p> <p>Important Reminder: Keep in mind that you know nothing about the conditions on the island at this time.</p> <p>The facilitator then asks the smaller groups to share with everyone which four tools they chose and why they chose them.</p>	15-20 minutes
Objective Inquiry	PowerPoint presentation  YouTube video: What is Critical Thinking?	<p>What Is Critical Thinking?</p> <p>Now, let us see how we use critical thinking to make choices—as we chose those four tools.</p> <p>Show video: <a href="#">What is Critical Thinking?</a> - YouTube</p> <p>Critical thinking is a process of identifying, asking, and answering the most useful questions before making a decision. A good decision is an informed one—meaning you have carefully explored the “pros and cons” before you commit to it.</p> <p>A critical thinker:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gathers and examines information;</li> <li>• looks for inconsistencies—things that “do not fit”;</li> <li>• questions logic—does one fact really flow from another? Does the information make sense?</li> <li>• remains open to new information that may change how they look at things; and,</li> <li>• arrives at a carefully thought-out conclusion.</li> </ul> <p>Critical Thinking is a skill that we use every day without really noticing. But just like any other skill, we can learn how to get better at it by becoming more aware of how we use it.</p>	30 minutes

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
(continued)		<p>As a starting point for improving our critical thinking skills, we can become more aware of ourselves and what influences the way we tend to think about elements of our lives.</p> <p>Here are some questions to ask, to help you to know yourself better:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are your beliefs, your values, your biases?</li> <li>• What factors/people/sources of information most influence your thinking?</li> </ul> <p>Once we become aware of what most influences us, we can take a look at ourselves from “outside the box,” to understand more about how we think.</p> <p>This makes it easier for us to see where we may need to step back and reflect more carefully about how we make decisions—to be “objective” rather than simply to react, on a “gut feeling.”</p> <p>It is important to feel comfortable about asking questions—and to continue asking them until we sense that we have a clear understanding of a given situation. As you critically consider a decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• do some research;</li> <li>• sort out the facts;</li> <li>• consider the source—can it be trusted?</li> </ul> <p>The Pros and Cons List Technique:</p> <p>Making a list of pros and cons can help us to understand a situation, sort through thoughts and ideas, and explore perspectives in order to arrive at an informed decision.</p> <p>This technique involves making two lists side by side: one column for pros and the other for cons.</p> <p>Your <b>pro</b> column—will show arguments in favour of something. Here, we write points that present benefits, advantages, and positive factors.</p> <p>Your <b>con</b> column—will show arguments against. Here, we write the points that reflect the negative impacts or consequences.</p>	

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
(continued)		<p>Pro and con lists help us to argue both sides of an argument, in order to make clear and unrushed decisions.</p> <p>This decision-making tool is also great to use when working in a group, as it allows everyone to share their ideas and to get more than one perspective on an issue.</p> <p>Weighing both perspectives should narrow down our thinking, to help us identify what is most useful to solve a problem and/or make a sound decision.</p>	
<b>Skill Practice</b>	<p>PowerPoint presentation</p> <p>Shipwreck worksheet A – List of Tools</p> <p>Shipwreck worksheet B – Challenge Cards</p> <p>Stationary (pens/pencils)</p> <p>Flipchart paper/markers</p>	<p>Shipwreck Part 2—Pros and Cons of the Four Tools</p> <p>When your group picked four tools earlier, you were already using critical thinking, even if you were not aware of it! Now see what happens when you apply the pros and cons list technique to your choices.</p> <p>Work within your group to write down the pros and cons of each of the four items selected.</p> <p>As you go through this activity, discuss the following within your group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How did you choose, and decide how helpful each item would be?</li> <li>2. What sources of information did you use to decide (assumption, past experience, knowledge, etc.)?</li> </ol> <p>Next, the facilitator should ask each group to share their results with everyone.</p> <p>Continue the discussion as a whole group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Did you feel any differently about your choice of tools after listing their pros and cons?</li> <li>4. What type of information do you think would be needed/useful to make better choices?</li> </ol> <p>The facilitator can write down these thoughts and ideas on chart paper.</p> <p>Shipwreck Part 3—Unique Island Scenarios</p> <p>The facilitator gives each smaller group a Challenge Card. Each card presents a unique island scenario that they will need to consider carefully if they are to “survive”.</p>	30–40 minutes



Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
(continued)		<p>The facilitator will then give each group the chance to trade in the first tools they picked for up to four new tools based on this new information about their island.</p> <p>Now ask the groups to make a second pros and cons list for each of these tools, to rate the usefulness of their new tools based on their given island scenario.</p> <p>Return to the whole group and explore the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is each group's unique island scenario?</li> <li>• If you traded in any of your tools, which ones were they? And why did you trade?</li> <li>• How did the new information about your island help you to choose?</li> </ul>	
Skill Application	<p>PowerPoint presentation</p> <p>Stationary (pens/pencils)</p> <p>Choices and Consequences worksheet</p>	<p>Just like our shipwreck, unexpected events can happen to us at any time.</p> <p>We may never have all of the facts necessary to make a perfect decision, but—as in the island scenarios—the more accurate the information we have, the better our decision-making is likely to be.</p> <p>Choices and Consequences: Now take a moment to think about a situation in your life when you had to make a big decision, one that you feel comfortable sharing with the whole group.</p> <p>Using the Choices and Consequences worksheet, write down the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What was the situation?</li> <li>2. What questions did you need answers to, to help you make a decision?</li> <li>3. How and where did you get the information you needed to make your choice?</li> <li>4. How did you weigh the information?</li> <li>5. Thinking back, would it have helped you to write down the pros and cons?</li> </ol> <p>The facilitator should ask participants to share their decisions with the whole group and elicit some overall thoughts about their findings.</p>	20–30 minutes

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Evaluation	PowerPoint presentation	<p>Participant Reflection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were some of the things that you feel you learned from today's exercise?</li> <li>• How might you apply what you learned in your day-to-day life?</li> </ul> <p>The facilitator should ask each participant to share one thing with the whole group.</p>	15 minutes

## FACILITATOR NOTES

Before delivering the lesson, the facilitator will need to create Challenge Cards by cutting them out of Shipwreck worksheet B.

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*"In 2021, I took part in the **Steps to Success** program. That was the beginning of my new life. It gave me new paths in learning, the motivation to challenge myself, and the drive to find independence. Today I have a full time job at the YWCA where I did my two week work experience. I am forever grateful to the program at the YWCA, especially to the staff who gave me a chance to evolve and find my hidden potential. Thank you!"*  
(YWCA THOMPSON Participant)



## 2.10 YWCA Toronto, Ontario

### Building Resilience

**Lesson Time:**  
2.5 hours  
(excluding breaks)

This learning module was delivered by YWCA Toronto as part of the curriculum of **Success Ready**, which was the program documented for Phase Three of the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures (BSF) project.

YWCA Toronto has long identified the fostering of independence and self-reliance as a key entry point to supporting young women's employability at a foundational level. Motivation and self-direction are vital to goal attainment and success, and are especially important in today's workforce and in our technology-based society.

There is an expectation in many workplaces that employees at all levels should bring commitment, drive, and energy to their role every day, to maximize productivity. Everybody in the workforce needs to upskill constantly if they are to keep pace with the technical skills relevant to their job, solve new problems, and collaborate with peers in the exchange of knowledge and ideas.

This lesson plan is designed to provide participants with a tool for setting goals, with a positive outlook for developing, adapting and reaching them in an ever-evolving world. Asset mapping is used in this lesson to aid self-discovery and planning for the future. An asset map can also serve as a guide for prioritizing the information that participants identify as most needed for their immediate next steps in asset development.

*"Resilience is the ability to work effectively under pressure, or in challenging situations, while maintaining a positive attitude. Resilience allows you to bounce back after a problem or difficult circumstance. The ability to be resilient in a working environment is essential to long-term success and not giving up after your first try at something new. Resilience also requires you to take care of yourself and those around you, be self-aware, and reach out for help when needed. Other skills related to resilience include mindfulness, purpose, self-care, and positive connections with others."*

(Indeed Editorial Team, 2023)

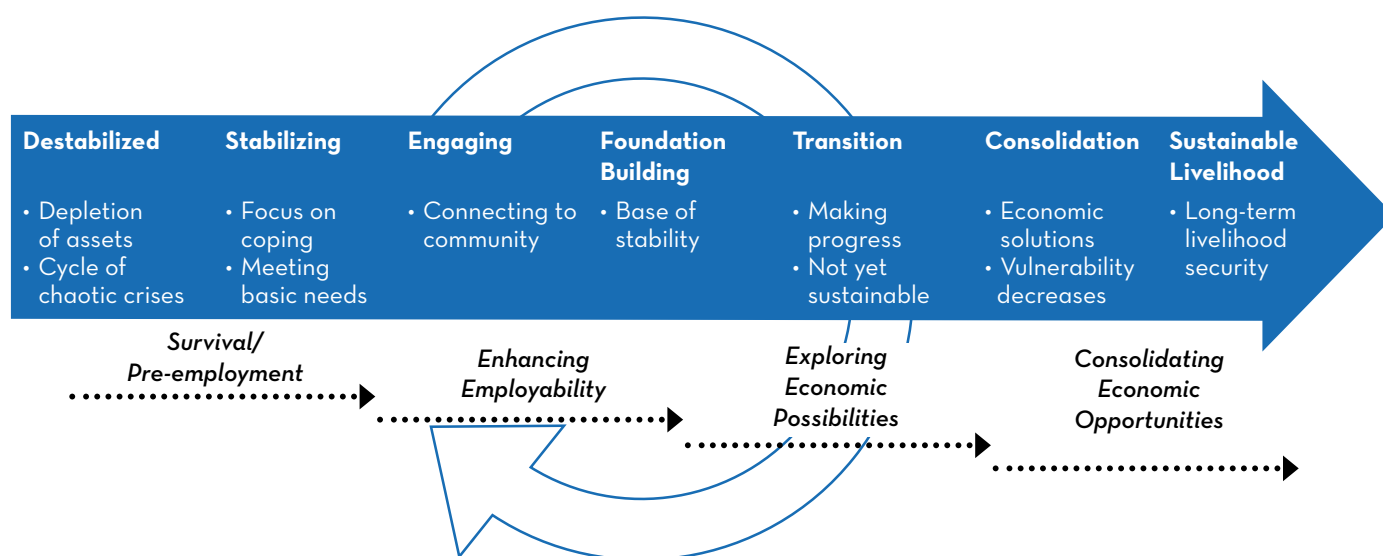


YWCA BUILDING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES MODEL



This workshop falls under the **Essential Skills & Employability Skills Training** component, but it is also foundational to the other components of the BSF model.

## STAGES OF LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT



With permission of Sustainable Livelihoods Canada

This workshop falls mainly into the **Enhancing Employability** stage of livelihood development but is relevant to any of the stages along the continuum.

## ESSENTIAL SKILLS INTEGRATED INTO THIS LESSON PLAN



READING



WRITING



DOCUMENT  
USE



NUMERACY



COMPUTER  
USE



THINKING



ORAL  
COMMUNICATION

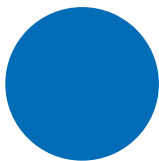


WORKING  
WITH OTHERS

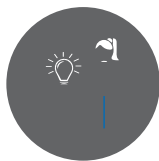


CONTINUOUS  
LEARNING

### EMERGING LABOUR MARKET SKILLS INTEGRATED INTO THIS LESSON PLAN



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE



ENTREPRENEURIAL APPROACH



FLEXIBLE/ADAPTABLE DIGITAL SKILLS



MOTIVATION AND SELF-DIRECTION

### YWCA TORONTO, SUCCESS READY

#### About the Association

Since 1873, **YWCA Toronto** has been dedicated to improving the lives of women and girls. We help women, girls and gender diverse people to flee violence, secure housing, find jobs, establish their voices, enhance skills and develop confidence. We offer a range of housing options, employment and training programs, community support programs, girls' programs and family programs; we also engage in systemic advocacy. **YWCA Toronto's** employment and training programs have for many decades provided support to women at all stages of their employment journeys. We offer career exploration and readiness workshops, skills development and training, placements and pre-apprenticeship opportunities, mentoring and job retention supports.

#### Our Local Context

In 2022, our regional labour market provided ample opportunities for entry-level/low-skilled work especially in the hospitality, tourism, and food service industries. Our **Success Ready** program participants often explore these more immediate options while also considering investing in paths to longer-term goals, which may provide stronger financial stability and independence. In Toronto, youth have numerous service providers to choose from, many of which offer paid training models. Although we do not have the capacity to offer training stipends, we can offer other incentives to attract participants. These include our reputation in the community, a combination of one-to-one and peer support opportunities, in-demand 21st century skills training, and hands-on work-integrated or experiential learning opportunities.

#### Demographic Focus of the Program

**Success Ready** is an innovative employment program designed for systemically marginalized young women and gender diverse individuals aged 16-29, including racialized, BIPOC, newcomers and LGBTQIA2+ peoples.

### PROGRAM OUTLINE

#### Program Purpose

**Success Ready** provides youth participating in the program with foundational essential skills and emerging labour market skills training, as well as mentoring, work-integrated and experiential learning, and job retention and advancement support to help them build successful, sustainable futures.

#### Program Description

Our program is grounded in the YWCA BSF asset-based approach toward enhancing young people's resilience, self-direction and economic security. This approach takes into consideration the whole individual and their unique strengths and assets, rather than perceived deficits. We aim to build the skills needed for systemically marginalized youth to gain satisfying employment in the 21st century labour market, as well



as supporting their self-empowerment and continued growth. Our program's unique, flexible menu of employment training modules allows them to explore their strengths and customize their pathways toward employment while also maintaining crucial one-to-one support from their Employment Counsellor and having access to a range of our other wraparound supports.

In October 2022, we established a new employer engagement initiative, both to share about the positive impact of **Success Ready** and our other employment training programs, and to promote job-ready graduates throughout their networks in the Greater Toronto Area. A key focus of this staff is to provide and nurture targeted supports for job seekers moving into the COVID-19 “new ways” of work. Through the initiative, we offer expertise and resources to help people enhance their skill portfolios—especially in the area of digital skills, and honing skills and strategies important for online recruitment—and position themselves for success in a hybrid working environment. For nearly a decade, the Toronto Commercial Real Estate Women (CREW) Foundation has been supporting generations of women seeking new employment opportunities, and has recently worked with us to develop our new 2022 employer engagement initiative. **YWCA Toronto's** partnership with CREW is featured in the Phase Three Compendium, Section 4.

## LESSON OUTLINE

### Lesson Description

This workshop presents a holistic and strengths-based approach to setting life goals through supporting participants in identifying their assets in a range of five areas: basic needs, skills and employability, identity, support and connections, and money. Assets form the building blocks for resiliency. This lesson is designed to provide participants with a positive outlook for developing, adapting, and reaching their individual life and work goals in an ever-evolving world. It can be delivered in-person or virtually.

### Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this learning module, participants will:

- **Understand** what a sustainable livelihood is, and describe the five asset areas and the importance of each in building resilience;
- **Identify** their current assets
- **Outline** a short-term goal using the My Plan tool and use the asset-based YWCA Building Sustainable Futures and Sustainable Livelihoods framework to identify goals for asset development;
- **Develop** a plan to use the asset mapping tool on an ongoing basis for reflection, evaluation of achievements, and continued goal setting

### Participant Prerequisites

None.

### Required Materials

- Flip chart or Whiteboard and markers

### Facilitator Resources

- Asset Map and My Plan worksheets—fillable PDF documents provided to participants either during the workshop or via virtual delivery that can be shared prior to the session, so participants can print them out if they prefer to complete the sheets manually
- PowerPoint presentation
- SMART Goals worksheet

**Note:** The facilitator should become familiar with the exercises and do a run-through themselves of the asset mapping tool before delivering the workshop. Facilitators should be familiar with the BSF/SL framework and the definition of asset areas and shocks/systemic context **before** they present this lesson.

### Lesson Time

2.5 hours (excluding breaks)

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Goals	PowerPoint presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe what assets are and how they relate to the YWCA BSF framework;</li> <li>Explore the five asset areas and how building them leads to resilience;</li> <li>Support participants in assessing and “mapping” their current assets; and,</li> <li>Show them how to use the framework to develop plans for future asset acquisition/ development.</li> </ul>	5 minutes
Rationale	PowerPoint Presentation	<p>The asset-based YWCA BSF model offers a holistic and strengths-based approach to goal setting.</p> <p>Assets are the building blocks for making positive changes and managing challenges in our lives in order to build resiliency.</p> <p>Change is constant and can be unexpected (think of the pandemic)! Resilience is a key skill for successfully adapting to changing circumstances.</p> <p>Approaching challenges from a strengths-based perspective can increase the prospects for a positive outcome.</p>	5 minutes
Warm-up	Flipchart and markers, or Whiteboard	<p>Ask participants to provide responses to the following question:</p> <p>What is “resilience” and how is it relevant to our lives?</p> <p>Record answers on a flip chart or Whiteboard.</p>	8 minutes
Stimulus	PowerPoint presentation	<p>If we had a magic wand that could grant you three wishes for your future, what would you wish for?</p> <p>Allow participants a few minutes to visualize their responses.</p> <p>Ask participants to share their three wishes with the larger group; document the responses on a flipchart/Whiteboard.</p> <p>Encourage participants to share: Even if someone else has already identified some of your ideas, please feel free to add yours, so we can see the overall collective aspirations of the group. Duplication actually allows us to note the commonalities/level of support for these ideas. Once everyone has had an opportunity to share, review and summarize the responses back to the group.</p>	10 minutes

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Evocation	<p>Flipchart and markers, or Whiteboard</p> <p>Asset-mapping worksheet</p>	<p>Debrief:</p> <p>What themes do we see from our responses?</p> <p>Common themes usually emerge: “good” job, home, “happiness,” healthy relationships, financial security/stability, being able to provide for their family, and a comfortable life.</p> <p>We may often use general terms such as “good” or “comfortable.” These qualifiers are highly subjective. It is likely that if we were asked to describe in greater detail what “good” looks like for each of us, our answers would present differences related to our personal values, current circumstances, life stage, etc.</p> <p>Similarly, when asked to rate our situation (assets) on a scale of 1-10, we may each determine a different value even when examining the same existing assets.</p> <p>This is a very personal exercise. Make clear to participants that they will not be asked to share any information aloud in the group that they are not comfortable doing. Encourage them to make notes for themselves and to rate their current assets for their own reflection and awareness.</p> <p>How can we make these wishes a reality (through setting goals, having a plan, education, finding support systems, building self-confidence, etc.)?</p>	15 minutes

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Objective Inquiry	PowerPoint presentation	<p>According to the American Psychological Association, resilience is “the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress—such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems or workplace and financial stressors.” (Canadian Mental Health Organization, 2016)</p> <p>Present the YWCA BSF framework (based on the Sustainable Livelihoods framework), starting by asking the participants to define the terms “sustainable,” “livelihood” and “asset.”</p> <p>In this model, a “livelihood” is about more than being able to find and keep a job, and/or surviving from paycheck to paycheck.</p> <p>Achieving a sustainable livelihood includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the ability to cope in life, and recover from stresses and shocks;</li> <li>• being able to make decisions and have a say;</li> <li>• being included in the community; and,</li> <li>• enjoying a good quality of life.</li> </ul> <p>Among our assets are our gifts, talents, expertise, knowledge, lived experiences and resources.</p> <p>Using the PowerPoint slides, present each of the five asset areas.</p> <p>The order of the asset areas flows from the asset map image used in this lesson, working clockwise around the diagram.</p> <p>Facilitator note to participants: In employment programs, we generally begin with exploring employability assets because participants have identified this as the area they wish to strengthen (since they came to the program to enhance these specific assets).</p> <p>Without a foundation of stability, it is extremely challenging for people to work on goals/asset development successfully. For example, your housing may not be ideal, but it needs to be at least relatively stable/sustainable. Having such basic needs in place allows our mental energy to be directed “beyond survival” to other activities.</p>	<p>40 minutes</p> <p>Facilitators should be familiar with the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures (BSF)/ Sustainable Livelihoods Framework and the definition of asset areas and shocks/ systemic context before they present this lesson</p>

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
(continued)		<p>Employability assets (usually the technical skills and qualifications employers wish to see in a résumé) are those which allow us to get and keep a job. These assets often also include soft skills such as problem-solving, emotional intelligence, communication, etc.</p> <p>Some guiding prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When it comes to my career, I am satisfied with my education and skill levels.</li> <li>• If I lost my current job, I am confident I could find another one.</li> <li>• I have a long-term plan for my career.</li> <li>• My physical health is good and does not limit my ability to earn an income if needed.</li> <li>• My mental health is good and does not limit my ability to earn an income if needed.</li> </ul> <p>Basic Needs are the assets that provide a stable basis for moving ahead and making changes.</p> <p>Some guiding prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can buy adequate food and clothing for myself and my family.</li> <li>• Given my other expenses, I am comfortable with the amount I spend on my housing.</li> <li>• My home is in good shape and does not need major repairs.</li> <li>• I feel safe in my neighbourhood.</li> <li>• My spouse/partner treats me with respect and is never abusive.</li> </ul> <p>Identity assets are about how we view and understand ourselves and what we are capable of. They may concern our inner lives, and may not be visible to others.</p> <p>Some guiding prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I know who I am and feel confident in my own abilities.</li> <li>• I know what I want in life and feel strongly motivated to make it happen.</li> <li>• I can do things as well as most people.</li> <li>• When life gets challenging, I feel confident I can handle it.</li> <li>• When I talk to myself, my words are positive and encouraging.</li> </ul>	

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
(continued)		<p>Financial assets include financial security and the knowledge/confidence/power to make financial decisions. These assets are about more than just a paycheque or having savings in the bank.</p> <p>Some guiding prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My income is regular and reliable.</li> <li>• I have enough money to buy what I need.</li> <li>• I am comfortable with the size of my household debt.</li> <li>• I have a good understanding of money, including income, debt, credit, and budgets.</li> <li>• I have a say in how financial decisions are made in my household.</li> </ul> <p>Support and Connections are the assets we can draw upon—such as family, friends, co-workers, community, etc.—to help us reach our goals. We need a variety of people for practical and emotional support in our personal and professional relationships.</p> <p>Some guiding prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If I need help in my personal life, I know my family/friends would be there for me.</li> <li>• When it comes to my career, I have a strong network of people to provide advice, coaching, or referrals.</li> <li>• In the last three months, I have participated in an organized community event (recreational, spiritual, cultural, political, neighbourhood, etc.).</li> <li>• I feel strongly connected to my community.</li> <li>• In my community, I am not afraid to take the lead and make things happen.</li> </ul> <p>Assets are often intertwined and can support other assets or have a ripple effect. For example: Participants choose to attend a training program to gain Skills and Employability assets. As they attend, they may find that they are also increasing their Support and Connections (network, mentor), and Identity (self-esteem) assets as well.</p>	

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
(continued)		<p>Shocks and the Systemic Context:</p> <p>Our assets can provide a safety net in the face of unexpected events. “Shocks” are external forces beyond our control that can cause sudden or gradual setbacks, which may deplete our assets (e.g., how people’s lives were affected by the pandemic). The more assets we have, the more we can protect ourselves from these shocks. Assets improve resiliency—the ability to bounce back.</p> <p>The systemic context can also affect our ability to move forward. Factors can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• racism, sexism, ageism; and,</li> <li>• the negative impact of cultural, political and environmental events.</li> </ul>	
<b>BREAK 10 minutes (optional)</b>			
Skills Practice	<p>PowerPoint presentation</p> <p>Asset Map worksheet</p> <p>SMART Goals worksheet</p>	<p>Asset Mapping Case Study Example: Marietta</p> <p>Break participants into small groups.</p> <p>Ask them to picture Marietta’s life currently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What might her assets look like?</li> <li>• How can she utilize her assets to meet her goals?</li> </ul> <p>Debrief as a large group and ask participants the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What helped your group with the process of working through the asset map in this case study?</li> <li>• What were the challenges to assessing her assets? (e.g., we were not given enough details, as in: What is “some” post-secondary education, how stable is her job, what are her future goals?)</li> </ul> <p>Perhaps you were able to make some assumptions about her situation, but without the details, it is challenging to rate or identify assets clearly.</p> <p>In order to determine how her assets can support her goals, it is important to have these specifics/details or a complete inventory of assets and a clear, specific goal in mind (SMART goals can be referenced here).</p>	<p>20 minutes for small group discussion</p> <p>15 minutes debrief activity</p>



Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
Skills Application	PowerPoint presentation  My Plan worksheet	<p>Reflect on your current assets in each of the five asset areas. Identify them with as much detail as you can. This may take you some time to complete (outside of this workshop). Set aside some time over the next few days to complete this part of the exercise while the content is still fresh in your mind.</p> <p>My Plan: Use your initial asset map to work toward a short-term goal (achievable in 2-6 months). Identify your goal and record it in the top-left box.</p> <p>Longer-term plans can be broken down into a series of shorter-term goals. (Identify what needs to happen first; and then after that is achieved, what the next step is). How can you best use the assets you currently have to help move you toward your goal?</p> <p>Which asset(s) would you like to acquire to further support this goal?</p> <p>How can you leverage your current assets to gain this new asset?</p> <p>Do you need information or support to do so?</p> <p>Or, now that you have identified this asset/goal, do you know what to do on your own?</p> <p>Plan to review the goal and assets again 2-3 months from now.</p> <p>Reflect and re-evaluate: What has changed in the time since you completed this first asset map?</p> <p>Have you met your goal?</p> <p>Have you added to or depleted your assets?</p>	20 minutes

Lesson Component	Required Materials/Resources	Activities	Facilitator Notes
(continued)		<p>Then, set up the next 2-3-month goal and keep moving forward incrementally, reflecting and re-evaluating every few months.</p> <p>Sometimes we do not recognize growth/change until we reflect on our journey. We can use an asset map to look back at where we started and how we have moved toward our goals.</p>	
Evaluation	PowerPoint presentation	<p>Ask the group: What have you learned about your current assets?</p> <p>Next steps: How will you use this information going forward?</p>	10 minutes

## FACILITATOR NOTES

- This workshop can be delivered to any size group (from five to 40 participants).
- Facilitators should be familiar with the YWCA BSF/ Sustainable Livelihoods framework and definition of asset areas and shocks/systemic context **before** they present this lesson.
- Youth audiences may need more guidance to identify their assets, depending on their circumstances (e.g., if they live with family—that is potentially a source of many assets they could access), and also to identify supports within their community.

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# SECTION 3:

## Highlights of Learning from the Project

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### Overview

Learning from the YWCA Building Sustainable Futures (BSF) project about effective Essential Skills for Employment (ESE) training practices has come far. Phase One witnessed the original exploration of **YWCA Toronto's** Sustainable Livelihoods-based asset mapping approach and employment and training model for women participants. In Phase Two, the project evolved to include a national demographic of participants and nine Collaborator Associations in the process of testing out the asset-based approach and model; of capacity building at program/organizational levels; and of an early model for employer engagement. In this third phase, the reach broadened to ten Associations from coast to coast; an enhanced model for employer and community engagement; and the integration of key YWCA BSF methodological frameworks to build capacity for stronger employment and livelihood outcomes.

For more detail on project outcomes, learning and recommendations moving forward, see the Phase Three Compendium.

### 3.1 LEARNING ABOUT THE PROJECT DEMOGRAPHIC

Learning from this project and our external research has shown the disproportional impacts of COVID-19 on women and other diverse and systemically marginalized populations, and has revealed a stark picture of intersectional barriers and regional disparities. It has also made clear the need for a continued proactive focus on gender, diversity and

equity in employment training programming. Many participants across the demographic reported benefitting from programs' investment in personal and foundational skills-building. However, adult learners—especially those with lived experience of intersecting, intergenerational systems of oppression—may require still more time and support to identify barriers and patterns that may be holding them back, as well as to gain, embed and build on new skills. Furthermore, learning and skills-building will not necessarily dismantle all barriers to participation. Unless the larger systems are changed, many women and gender diverse people in the project demographic will continue to face socio-economic exclusion.

### 3.2 LEARNING ABOUT AN ASSET-BASED APPROACH

As in Phase Two of the YWCA BSF project, the YWCA BSF asset-based tools captured a holistic picture of strengths and challenges across Canada at the level of individual participants, programs and regional contexts. A new, serendipitous discovery in Phase Three was how remarkably effective the approach and tools were for learning about the multiple impacts of COVID-19. The context of a global health crisis reminded us all of how easily unforeseen setbacks—including in this case sickness and death—can derail our progress and result in cycling back on the path to building sustainable futures. For some practitioner tips about using the YWCA BSF asset mapping tools based on Phase Three learning, see the Phase Three Compendium, Section 5.

### 3.3 LEARNING ABOUT A RECIPE OF SKILLS FOR BUILDING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

Most of the emerging labour market skills identified in Phase Two and explored in this phase—Motivation and Self-Direction, Emotional Intelligence, and an Entrepreneurial Approach—are at the same time foundational and a part of continuous learning. Programs have been working to build these skills for years without necessarily naming them as such. In the same way, without always naming it as asset-based, most effective community service agencies take a respectful, strengths-based approach to the people they work with rather than focusing on their deficits; which is why asset-based thinking resonates so well with many practitioners who are new to the concept. The Life Skills approach to adult learning, with its respect for past experience and subjective feelings, also puts a name to what practitioners and participants may already be doing, although perhaps less intentionally.

Life Skills Coaching training has enabled staff to become more strategic and consistent in their work with participants. As Collaborators have noted, Life Skills further provides an excellent framework for teaching not just emerging skills but also other practical skills that are bound to evolve with changes in technology, the labour market and broader society.

The recipe emerging from this national project is a combination of a) a holistic asset-based approach + b) an evolving understanding of essential skills for employment + c) an experiential Life Skills approach to working with participants, so that they can build a foundation for sustainable success. The new Skills for Success areas are an exciting step forward in exploring the more personal capacities necessary to advance in the labour market, and how these can be acquired through experiential learning along with the other skills for employment.

Collaborators are eager to work not just with funders but with all program stakeholders to find more appropriate and flexible ways to gather participant data and measure what success may look like in a more equitable way related to participant life experiences, challenges and goals. The wealth of qualitative learning collected digitally in this phase of the national initiative bears witness to the advantages of a more flexible format. It also shows the potential of such participant and staff report to convey a much fuller, textured understanding of project outcomes than some of the more traditional “results-based” indicators.

### 3.4 LEARNING ABOUT EMPLOYER AND COMMUNITY PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

The strategy to integrate the YWCA BSF framework for employer and community partner engagement was an inspiration to Collaborators, encouraging them to review their existing practices and experiment with new networks and partnerships, and ways to “get the word out” about their programs. Even during COVID restrictions, without the advantage of in-person contact, Collaborators still managed to grow their connections and increase participants’ awareness of local employment opportunities. The framework encouraged all Collaborators to be more strategic and formalized in their engagement activities. It also helped start a conversation about new ways in which employers can engage more collaboratively with participants and programs, not just as providers of jobs/job shadowing/placements and mentoring.

### 3.5 LEARNING ABOUT PROMOTING COMMUNITY ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT

The YWCA BSF national project and other capacity building partnerships have continued to find effective strategies to promote community economic development. As before, however, much of the “heavy lifting” was done by dedicated and professional Collaborator staff. The number of Associations and the varying organizational capacities involved also proved to be a lot of work for the ESE team, particularly in the context of COVID-19, which brought on the sudden shift to virtual programming in March 2020. Even before COVID-19 struck, staff were already hard pressed by their dedication to serving participants’ needs and supporting successful outcomes, while worrying about their own futures in their precarious job positions, as well as the sustainability of their programs. The context of COVID has shown yet more clearly how difficult it is to “shockproof” programs against staff turnover within the same precarious project-based funding model. These talented and passionate people leave behind a vacuum, often taking with them a “library” of accumulated knowledge, resources, referrals, connections and organizational investments in training.

When Collaborators were asked about advocacy areas for programs/organizations, they universally included access to sustained funding with more flexibility as to how organizations could allocate the funds. Program staff take pride in what they do and in their experience of how and where funding can be invested most productively. The irony is that their agile and effective strategies can obscure the true precarity of their organizational capacities. More stable, multi-year funding over a period of at least three to five years will support organizations both in attracting and retaining staff, and in promoting the quality and sustainability of their programs and services. During the pandemic, many organizations and businesses were allowed more latitude as to how they did their work. This flexibility should continue, in order to ensure the best possible outcomes for participants.

## MOVING FORWARD: CONTINUING TO GROW A COMMUNITY OF KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

Overall learning from both phases of the YWCA BSF national project has shown a clear and continuing need for long-term consistent investment in programs focused on women and gender diverse individuals and for stronger action to dismantle the intersecting barriers faced by newcomers, mature workers, youth, and Indigenous people. These are challenges difficult and sometimes impossible for individuals, organizations and communities to surmount without systemic change.

The pandemic shift to online program delivery in Phase Three demonstrated how rapidly connectivity is becoming a basic need for participation in the 21st century labour market and in broader society. In remote communities, the need became glaringly obvious. Governments and other stakeholders should be urged to ensure widespread access to connectivity, equipment, and the upgrading of digital skills. Programs and organizations should also be supported to offer more workshops related to digital literacy, and to further virtual learning and employment opportunities, networks, etc.

Evidence from this phase also suggests that the YWCA Life Skills model, combined with the YWCA BSF strengths-based approach to experiential skills building, would be an excellent framework for promoting program innovations with our project demographic. A further piece for advocacy across the board with private and public sectors and all levels of government will be to act on the recognition that these experiential skills are a work in progress for everyone, as part of an ongoing effort to move toward socio-economic justice. We are all in a process of continuous learning about how to create a truly diverse, equal and inclusive community.

With each phase, the perspective has grown increasingly holistic as we have begun to discover more about how these phases of knowledge exchange can build upon each other to enhance participants' opportunities for success. But knowledge exchange and the work of updating and refining curricula cannot be done "off the side of the desk" by over-stretched staff. The potential impact of research projects such as this may be limited unless programs and organizations have adequate resources to sustain their important core work. Meanwhile, COVID-19 has acted as an important reminder of the larger, intersecting forces that hold people back. It has shown how urgently that bigger conversation is needed about finding new approaches to funding, and about a sustained collective effort to dismantle the systemic inequalities and injustices that the pandemic laid bare.



## PROJECT RESOURCES

### YWCA BSF Project Publications: Phase Two

#### English

2019 YWCA Building Sustainable Futures  
Compendium

[https://www.ywcatoronto.org/Assets/YWCA/  
Documents/Our Programs/Employment and Training/  
ESE/BSF-Phase 1-3/ESE\\_Compndium\\_DIGITAL.pdf](https://www.ywcatoronto.org/Assets/YWCA/Documents/Our Programs/Employment and Training/ESE/BSF-Phase 1-3/ESE_Compndium_DIGITAL.pdf)

2019 YWCA Building Sustainable Futures Toolkit

[https://www.ywcatoronto.org/Assets/YWCA/  
Documents/Our Programs/Employment and Training/  
ESE/BSF-Phase 1-3/ESE\\_Toolkit\\_DIGITAL.pdf](https://www.ywcatoronto.org/Assets/YWCA/Documents/Our Programs/Employment and Training/ESE/BSF-Phase 1-3/ESE_Toolkit_DIGITAL.pdf)

#### French

Contains select content from the 2019 Compendium  
and Toolkit above:

YWCA Construire des avenir durables résumé  
et trousse

[https://www.ywcatoronto.org/Assets/YWCA/  
Documents/Our Programs/Employment and Training/  
ESE/BSF-Phase 1-3/ESE\\_French\\_DIGITAL.pdf](https://www.ywcatoronto.org/Assets/YWCA/Documents/Our Programs/Employment and Training/ESE/BSF-Phase 1-3/ESE_French_DIGITAL.pdf)

### Phase One

2010 Compendium of Best Practices in  
Employment Programming

[https://www.ywcatoronto.org/Assets/YWCA/  
Documents/Our Programs/Employment and Training/  
ESE/ESE\\_Compndium\\_Complete\\_Spread\\_view.pdf](https://www.ywcatoronto.org/Assets/YWCA/Documents/Our Programs/Employment and Training/ESE/ESE_Compndium_Complete_Spread_view.pdf)

### Select Resources Referenced for Some of the Key Phase Three YWCA BSF Frameworks:

#### YWCA BSF Asset Mapping and Adaptation of the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach:

[https://www.canadianwomen.org/wp-content/  
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### Skills for Success:

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report-en.pdf](https://www.srdc.org/media/553148/sfs-srdc-final-report-en.pdf)

### The YWCA Toronto Life Skills Model and Training:

[https://www.ywcatoronto.org/OurPrograms/  
employmentandtraining/iwanttoealifeskillcoach](https://www.ywcatoronto.org/OurPrograms/employmentandtraining/iwanttoealifeskillcoach)

[https://www.ywcatoronto.org/ourprograms/  
employmentandtraining/iwanttoealifeskillcoach/  
lifeskillspublications](https://www.ywcatoronto.org/ourprograms/employmentandtraining/iwanttoealifeskillcoach/lifeskillspublications)

### The YWCA BSF Leadership Training:

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### YWCA Moncton

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