



# Engagement tree

**Type of tool :** Participatory facilitation tool

**Date of creation :** /

**Created by :** Inspired by the work of Dina Scherrer with the "Tree of Life" approach

**Duration (if relevant) :** 2 to 3 hours (can be adapted)

**Targeted audience :** Mixed groups, community members, teams, intercultural groups

**Number of participants :** 4 to 15 (adaptable)

**Number of facilitators :** 1 to 2 in function of the group

**Material :**

- Large sheets of paper or cardboard
- Colored pens, pencils, or markers
- Scissors, glue, magazines (for collage if needed)
- Photolangage images
- String or clips for hanging the trees on a wall (forest of engagement)

## DESCRIPTION

The *Engagement Tree* tool invites each participant to represent their experiences, emotions, and values through a symbolic tree. These trees are then shared with the group and displayed together to create a "forest of engagement." This visual and participatory process fosters personal expression, active listening, and group cohesion.

## OBJECTIVES

The goal is to uncover individual and shared values within the group to strengthen collective engagement. The tool helps build a common narrative and identify action steps rooted in these values. It also supports authentic, intercultural dialogue in a safe and respectful environment.

# PART 1

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## Explanation

**This lesson plan was created based on various examples in Dina Scherrer's book, *Accompagner avec l'Arbre de vie, Une pratique narrative pour restaurer l'estime de soi* (available in French).**

The "Engagement trees" workshop is a fun and creative way to work on individual and group engagement narratives to uncover the shared priorities and values of a group and turn them into action.

### Learning objectives

- **Individual:** Make the engagement narrative visible and document it, find the common theme of the engagement path, and identify values and pivotal moments
- **Group:** Connect individual experiences to reveal a collective story of engagement specific to a group or team.
- As part of intercultural discussions, these narratives are an authentic way to promote equal, genuine connection and collective reflection.

### Materials needed (to be provided by the workshop facilitator)

- Paper/stands for drawing
- Pencils, markers, crayons
- Pictures of trees as narrative cards
- Sticky notes and space to hang posters
- Place for hanging up participants' work (e.g., wall, whiteboard)

### Workshop (90 minutes to 2 hours)

#### 1. Create a safe environment

The facilitator describes the learning objectives and establishes ground rules.

#### 2. Narrative cards

Participants each choose a picture of a tree that symbolises their engagement path. Materials: narrative cards (e.g. Les Filles du Baobab).

#### 3. Present the tool

The facilitator introduces the tree of life method and its different components.

#### 4. Participants draw their engagement tree (individual exercise)

Participants each draw their own engagement trees with the following parts:

- **Roots:** Personal values and stories that serve as the foundation of their path
- **Trunk:** Pivotal moments along their engagement path
- **Branches:** Key projects
- **Leaves:** Resource persons
- **Flowers and fruit:** Achievements, triumphs, hopes
- **Name the tree**

# PART 2

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## 5. Group discussion and emotions

Share key elements of each tree with the group. Discussion about moving or surprising elements.

## 6. Forest of engagement

All the trees are hung up together.

- Which words or images reflect the values that are important to the group?
- What do they convey to the group?
- If the group/forest had a name, what would it be?

### Extension activities

- Use the narratives as a basis for a collective narrative for the group.
- Create actions for engagement based on shared values.
- Deepen the intercultural aspects and authenticity of discussions.
- Integrate the values identified in the organisation's practices.

### Facilitators' experiences

- "This workshop helped several people realise the value of their experiences and the relationships they have with others."
- "The group discussion brought everyone closer together, with a stronger sense of belonging."

### Things to keep in mind

- Create a climate of trust and respect.
- Respect others' rhythms and abilities.
- Maintain confidentiality around what people share.
- Encourage but do not force participants to share.