

7. Community

Etymology: Late-14th c., ‘a number of people associated with one another by the fact of residence in the same locality’, also ‘the common people’ (not the rulers or the clergy), from Old French *comunité* ‘community, commonness, everybody’ (Modern French *communauté*), from Latin *communitatem* (nominative *communitas*) ‘community, society, fellowship, friendly intercourse; courtesy, condescension, affability’, from *communis* ‘common, public, general, shared by all or many’ (see common (adj.)).¹

Suggestions for value-specific questions in VISION dialogues

- Has community always been here?
- What is community not?
- What does it mean to offer community to others?
- How is community related to the stars or the moon?
- Community is related to the ordinary or typical. What are the strengths of this? What are the weaknesses?
- What characterises duties in a community?
- How much and what do members of a community need to have in common to be considered a community?
- What makes a community strong or exceptional?
- Is a community changeable?
- Who decides the balance between giving and taking within a community?
- What is the relationship between community and collectivism?
- Is community reserved for human beings, or do other species have the right to form communities as well?
- If community could speak, what would it say?

Suggestions for exercises and creative activities to inspire a VISION reflection

Waving reeds

Duration: 10 minutes, with the possibility of extending it to a full day with follow-up activities

Description: This exercise is highly adaptable and can be facilitated in various settings, but it is particularly effective when conducted outdoors, weather permitting. Facilitating the activity outside fosters a deeper connection to nature and the environment, enhancing participants’ engagement and embodiment.

Stand in a circle with a little distance between one another. Feel the ground under your feet, rooting the soles of your feet into the ground. Push down and lengthen your body upwards, as if someone was pulling a string from the top of your head. Once standing straight like this, shake out any stiffness and allow your belly and chest to relax and soften. Close your eyes, if it feels comfortable; otherwise look at the ground in front of you. Make space for breathing in and out, feeling the belly and chest moving in and out with each breath. Remain here for a few breaths. Now, transfer your weight to the front of your feet, without lifting your heels from the ground. Return to the middle and then transfer your weight to the heels, again without lifting the front of

¹ Extract compiled from <https://www.etymonline.com/word/community>, last accessed 1 May 2026.

your feet from the ground. Return to the middle and then move the weight to the left side of your feet, maintaining contact with the ground with the right side. Return to the middle and find your balance, where the weight is equally distributed across all four sides of your feet, and take a deep breath here. Now, gently open your eyes, sensing your surroundings whilst not focusing or unblurring your vision and without making eye contact with the people around you. Start taking small steps towards the middle of the circle, moving a little closer to each other, until you can feel the arms of your two nearest-neighbours against your own arms. This contact should be rather firm, yet still allow everyone to maintain a sense of their own personal space. Close your eyes again or look at the ground. Use your tactile sense and intuition to start a soft wave in the circle, moving from the right to the left, adjusting to each other, taking your time together to find a common pace and rhythm, like the gentle swaying of reeds in the wind. Once established, remain in that wave for a few moments, just being and noticing the experience. When finishing, take your time to find a stillness together again and move a bit away from each other before opening your eyes, looking around, and seeing each other anew.

Use this exercise to begin reflections about *community, participation, belonging, inclusion, safety, care*, and other related topics. Make sure to introduce the exercise thoroughly, emphasising that it requires contact with other people's arms from the side, however, which is less intimate than standing in front of each other. Make space to allow people to decline to participate if they do not want to. If participants do not know each other very well, let them move further away from each other before looking at one another and allow the follow-up to focus on the value that you are exploring, leaving any individual feelings that may have come up out of the discussion. The exploration following the exercise can also take the form of a drawing, writing in silence, or talking in pairs before sharing in the group.

This exercise can last from 10 minutes to an entire day, particularly if you elaborate with other creative exercises as well. If participants do not know each other, it works better when lighter and shorter.

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