

## #BECAUSEWEVEREAD EXTRA FACILITATION TIPS

- Introduce yourself to the group & individually to people if you have the time (this helps to make everyone feel comfortable)
- If you notice that someone has come alone, introduce them to another person in the group that they can talk to
- Check if everyone is comfortable with you taking pictures/videos and if they give consent for them to be used on socials
- To establish safety at the beginning of the session, you could ask the group 'what makes them feel safe' when they arrive. Before you start discussing the book, you could discuss their responses and this allows for you all to create a safe space together
- Depending on how long your session is, take small breaks so people can chat and get more comfortable with each other
- Look out for people who may feel uncomfortable (are quiet, not engaged) and in breaks, talk to them individually about the book/something else
- Depending on your audience, be mindful of conversations becoming 'too academic', as not everyone will understand certain terminology. One way to do this is by asking yourself if a relative, who hasn't had the same educational background as you, would understand?
- Sometimes people are reluctant to say whether they don't understand something, so as the facilitator you can ask people for further explanations/definitions
- Be mindful of 'ranting' and/or if personal stories are taking the conversation in the wrong direction. Gently redirect a person by asking a question in relation to the text/resources
- Take breaks if you find that the conversation is getting intense. This may be okay for you as the facilitator but check to see how it's affecting everyone else
- Not everyone is comfortable expressing themselves verbally, one way to get around this is to use paper prompts. Write down questions on paper so people can write their responses. This is also a good way to prevent people from talking too much as they can see that other people have thoughts to contribute
- If you have over 5 members in the group, you could break into smaller group conversations as some people feel more comfortable talking in lesser numbers and it also allows them to take some lead on the conversation

- Bring the group back together after these small group convos and ask for reflections/what they were discussing. Depending on how long your session is, you can do this a few times (it also helps people to feel more comfortable with each other)
- At the end of the club, ask for feedback. Preferably on paper so they aren't put on the spot: did they feel comfortable engaging? What would make them feel more engaged and/or comfortable? (This allows for people to have some input into how the club is shaped)
- One way to see if you've met the goal of the book club is to ask people at the end what they've learnt. Preferably on paper so people aren't put on the spot – though if everyone is comfortable sharing, verbally is fine!
- If something offensive happens in the club and you only realise after (certain language is used), just get in touch with all the attendees asap to apologise, and reassure them that you made a mistake, and it's a learning point for you now that it has been raised

## **ONLINE FACILITATION**

- Ask people before hand that you'd like videos to be turned on to facilitate a better dialogue between participants
- Ask participants to mute themselves when someone is talking so that no background noise disrupts the speaker
- Ask for intros and a non-text related question to break the ice and don't feel you have to rush this process, you'll generate better convo around the text if everyone is feeling more at ease with each other e.g.
  - What colour are you feeling today? And what else are you reading?
  - What's one thing that's made you feel joyful over the past few days/weeks?
  - What's one thing you've been reflecting on over the past few days?
- Limit the amount of people joining the online session to a manageable number e.g. for me it's about 8 - 12 participants
- Ask people to note what they want to talk about at the beginning so you have prompts for the whole session + come with your own prompts / ask people to read out favourite passages
- Finish off the convo with another non-text related question (something lighter as I find that sometimes these conversations can be quite heavy e.g)
  - What's one thing that made you feel joyful?
  - What's one thing you do to bring you some ease when you're feeling down?
  - Etc

## **SAFE SPACES AGREEMENT/POLICY**

Caveat: depending on your audience, consider whether this is useful or necessary to have. For example, if you are reaching more community members who won't have educational backgrounds in any of these topics around racisms etc, a safe spaces policy may alienate them due to unknown language and feeling like they have to already know things before entering the space.

However, if you're mainly reaching people who are from certain educational backgrounds and or are white and you do require that they educate themselves on certain things before entering the space, then it is useful e.g. I use it when I'm reaching mainly graduates and white communities but I don't use it when in community spaces.