

Focus Group of Stress Management Course Facilitators

Instructions for moderators

Before you begin, read the verbal consent script. Ask each respondent to respond to two requests for consent: (1) consent for participating in the focus group and (2) consent to record the focus group. Do not record the focus group if you do not have all the respondents' consent to do so. Do not start recording until after all the respondents have agreed.

CONSENT SCRIPT

First round: Thank you for taking the time to speak with us today. My name is [NAME 1], and I work for a research organization called Mathematica. [NAME 2] is also from Mathematica and will be taking notes during today's focus group. Our discussion today will help us understand what is working well and what is not working well in the MOMS Partnership Stress Management Course. Based on this discussion, we will work with you and other Viability staff to improve the course. This is the first of up to four meetings like this.

Later rounds: Thank you for taking the time to speak with us today. As a reminder, my name is [NAME 1], and I work for a research organization called Mathematica. [NAME 2] is also from Mathematica and will be taking notes during today's focus group. As a result of our last discussion, some changes were made to the MOMS Partnership Stress Management Course. Our discussion today will help you and other Viability staff further improve the course.

Participation in this focus group is voluntary. There are no penalties or consequences for deciding not to participate in the focus group. We would like to hear from each of you, but you do not need to answer any question that is asked during the focus group.

We would also like your permission to record the conversation, so we can accurately capture what you have to say. If you do not agree to the recording, you can still participate, and we will not record it and [NAME 2] will take notes. Only Mathematica and Viability staff will have access to the recording and notes.

Do you have any questions about the study?

Before we can begin, I need to confirm your participation by asking you two questions:

- Do you agree to participate in the study? *Yes/No*
- *If yes:* Do you agree to the audio recording? *Yes/No*

A. Ground Rules

Now I just need to go over a few ground rules.

- A focus group is just a guided discussion. As the facilitator, I have a set of questions that I'd like to cover today, but we encourage open conversation.
- This discussion will last up to 60 minutes.

- Please speak one at a time, in a voice as loud as mine and mute your phone if you're not speaking so we don't get background noise. We also hope you will use the video feature so we can see you. This will help me follow the discussion and it will also help us with the recording and notes.
- We really want to hear from everyone today, but you don't have to answer every question.
- There may be times in the discussion where you feel differently from others and we want to hear about that. Even though you may feel differently than others in this [virtual] room, you represent others who aren't participating today who may have similar feelings.
- We want to hear the good and the bad – there are no right or wrong answers here, and we respect differences of opinion.
- This session is private. We ask that you respect each other's privacy once we end the focus group– in other words, what happens in the focus group stays in the focus group!

Does anyone/Do you have any questions about the ground rules or about this discussion? (*Facilitator addresses any final questions and turns on recorder if all consented.*)

B. Introductions

1. *For focus groups only:* To start, we would love to have everyone share:
 - a. Your first name
 - b. Your role at your agency or with MOMS Partnership

C. MOMS Partnership Stress Management Course

1. How are the logistics of the classes working? *Probe for the following:*
 - a. [If in person] What do you think about the location? Are participants able to get there easily and on time? Is the location one that participants feel is safe?
 - b. [If in person] How is the room? Is it comfortable? Would you suggest any changes to the set up? Is the room one that participants perceive as comfortable?
 - c. [If virtual] Tell us about your experience with facilitating the groups virtually. Is the meeting platform easy to use? Do participants have problems with the technology? Are participants distracted during the class? Are there other challenges with the virtual format?
 - d. [If virtual] What works best about the virtual format? What could be improved?
 - e. What times and days of the week seem to generate the best turnout? The best energy level for group members?
 - f. [If relevant:] To what extent are participants using the child care available to them for the MOMS Partnership course? What might be influencing their decision to use it or not? What is working well? What are some challenges?
2. What would you change, if anything, about the logistics of the class?
3. About how many participants are showing up to class? How is the number influencing the group dynamic? What feels like the ideal number of participants to attend class? How many is too many? How many is too few?
4. What do you do when a participant doesn't show up? What strategies appear to work best in helping participants show up to the classes?

5. What strategies have you used to encourage participants to show up for the groups (for example, reminders)? Which strategies appear to work best? What is not as effective?
6. What resources do you use to prepare for the classes?
 - a. Do you use the MOMS Partnership Instructor manual, Participant manual, or Summary Guidelines?
 - b. What are your impressions of the examples in these materials? Are they relatable? Do they resonate with all the participants in the class? If not, which ones do they not resonate with?
 - c. What suggestions do you have for improving these materials?
 - d. What changes might help them connect with people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds?
 - e. Do you use other resources in preparing for the class?
7. What other changes do you recommend to the course format, curriculum, engagement strategies, or anything else that might strengthen the groups?
8. Are there areas in which you need additional training or support? Please describe.

Thank you for sharing your opinions and experiences with me today. This has been very helpful. Please contact me directly if there is anything you would like to discuss or if you have any concerns.

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