

Planting for Success – a mindful and reflective activity

This activity was specifically designed and developed by the Forum hosts for the **‘Same Same but Different’** Regional Reform Forum held on 20 May 2022 at The Secret Garden, Marion Hotel, South Australia. The purpose of this activity was to encourage participants to reflect on different aspects of their organisation in relation to the proposed new Support at Home Program.

The following guided script, along with the supporting Powerpoint slides available [here](#), may be used within your own organisation ensuring acknowledgement is given to the creators of this resource: Collaborative Project Officers of Southern Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island Positive Ageing Taskforce, Riverland Mallee Coorong Taskforce, Hills Positive Ageing Project, Southern Services Reform Group.

Designed as a facilitated mindfulness exercise, with individual quiet reflection, this activity takes approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. You may choose to adapt it to suit your purpose and/or encourage discussion about each organisational element – in this case you will need to allow extra time accordingly.

Items required for each participant:

- Pot
- Selection of different succulent plants (suggest 3 or 4 per person)
- Planting pack (paper bag) including:
 - o Stones (gravel)
 - o Soil (potting mix)
 - o Tools (wooden spoon and fork)
 - o Gloves
 - o Pop stick (name label)

GUIDED SCRIPT:

Highlighted words with numbers correlate to the supporting Powerpoint slide number and clicks - for example: (1) = slide 1; (3.5) = slide 3, click #5

PLANTING FOR SUCCESS (1)

Hello everyone! Today we invite you to participate in a mindful and reflective practical activity... **“Planting for Success”**.

We **acknowledge** (2) that this resource was designed and developed by Collaborative Project Officers of Southern Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island Positive Ageing Taskforce, Riverland Mallee Coorong Taskforce, Hills Positive Ageing Project, and Southern Services Reform Group.

As we progress through this activity, we encourage you to reflect on each element related to **your organisation**... This is a mindfulness exercise, so we ask that you focus on your own space and progress through this activity in quiet reflection – there will be opportunities throughout the day for you to discuss and share about this activity should you wish to do so. But for now, let's focus on our own space and our own thoughts and ideas...

On your table you will find some activity packs, some plants, and a variety of different pots.

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Firstly, we would like you to select a **pot**... you will notice that the pots are different sizes, shapes, colours. Just like each of our organisations are different – please choose one of the pots you would like to represent your organisation and place it in front of you.

Next, you have the opportunity to choose up to three different **succulent plants** from the selection in the middle of your table. These will represent the services your organisation offers, you might just choose one, or you might choose two or three or maybe four. Place these next to your pot.

You also each have a little planting pack, inside you will find a little bag of soil, some stones, a glove, some tools, and a name label.

Now that you have what you need, let us proceed.

POT (3.1) – Let's focus on the pot that you have chosen, take a moment to reflect on why you chose that specific pot. Remember that this pot is representing your **organisation**. In gardening, a pot serves the purpose of containing the soil and plants – it needs to be fit for purpose; the right size and shape for the plants it will contain, and sufficient to allow for growth of the plants.

In relation to your **organisational framework (3.2)**, what are the things that are fixed and rigid (like this pot)? ...the parameters that you need to work within... things like legislation and industry standards, government and organisational requirements that you need to adhere to... What about the capacity and resources of your organisation to allow for growth and expansion of services? (pause...)

TOOLS & GLOVES (3.3) – You have some tools and gloves in your pack. The tools will assist you to undertake this activity and the gloves can be used literally as PPE to protect you from the potential risks associated with this activity.

Thinking about your organisation, what **tools** do you have in place that allow you to undertake your activities?... Does your organisation have sufficient **protective strategies** in place to assist with minimising risks? (pause...)

STONES (3.4) – Let's shift our focus now to the stones. Since our pots do not have drainage holes, placing stones in the bottom of the pot can serve a purpose in facilitating drainage and preventing the roots of your plants from becoming water-logged and rotting. Alternatively, or additionally, these stones could be used decoratively on top of the soil to embellish or add attractiveness to your potted creation. The choice is yours.

As you are deciding what purpose you will choose for your stones, think about your organisation and workplace culture... do you have adequate policies and strategies in place to allow for **"drainage" and flow through (3.5)** of resources (human and practical) to keep the organisational environment healthy, well-balanced and

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responsive? (pause...) You might like to add some stones to the bottom of your pot now.

If choosing to leave some of your stones to be used as an embellishment, think about the things that make your organisation **attractive**... Do you have an 'attractive' **workplace culture** (3.6)? Is it attractive to new staff? and existing staff?... What makes your organisation attractive to potential clients? (pause...)

SOIL (3.7) – Now to a “very” important element – the soil - serving many vital roles in the growth and health of your plants. Healthy soil acts as a foundation for plants by supporting plant roots and keeping plants upright for growth. Soil acts as a pantry for plants, storing and cycling essential nutrients and minerals that plants need to grow. The soil stores water for plants; and maintains adequate aeration for plants, providing oxygen for microbes, insects and plant roots. The soil is a habitat for beneficial soil microbes; these organisms are nature's hidden helpers. They form synergistic relationships with plants to protect them from stress and provide them with nutrients, among other tasks. The soil also filters surface water of dust, chemicals and other contaminants. Wow – so many vital roles!!

As you are using your tools to place the soil in your pot, think about all the amazing functions this soil has to support the life and growth of your plants... in relation to your organisation, what are the **foundational elements** (3.8) your organisation has in place to support the growth of your services?... What resources exist within your organisation to help nurture and develop your services?... How do you ensure you have adequate staffing, funding, and support?... Is your organisational environment healthy?... What protective strategies do you have in place? (pause...)

The great thing about soil is that it can be adapted and modified by adding different elements to create a suitable environment to support healthy growth. Consider all the things you can influence, change, and nurture within your organisation to develop a healthy environment and set up for success...(pause)

PLANTS (3.9) – Now that you have prepared the environment, you are ready to plant your selected succulents. As mentioned at the beginning of this activity, these represent the services your organisation offers. We have chosen succulents, as they are resilient – you can uproot them and replant them with a very good chance of sustaining life, they can thrive in times where resources (such as water and nutrients) are scarce, and they can even be planted with no established roots and still grow and flourish with a bit of nurturing.

This is timely for us to consider in terms of the **services** (3.10) we offer and what the potential impact will be as we transition to the proposed new Support at Home Program. As you plant your “services” reflect on what will be required as you position your organisation for the transition. Is your organisation resilient, agile and adaptable? What resources will you need? What support is available?

Stones (ref 2) (3.11) - If you saved some of your stones for decoration, you can now add these on top of your soil... as you reflect on the things that make your organisation **attractive** (3.12). You may have noticed that others on your table have different coloured stones, this represents the **diversity** of elements that makes your organisation

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attractive or relevant to community members... In the spirit of collaboration, you may like to share some of your stones with others at your table as a symbol of sharing ideas and resources, or partnering together on shared initiatives/projects to support the diverse needs of your local communities.

NAME LABEL (3.13) – The finishing touch is to add your name to the label stick provided and place this in your pot. You could think of this as your organisation's **branding (3.14)**. Are you proud to put your name to your potted creation? Does your organisation confidently display its brand to proudly promote the services you provide?

OTHER RESOURCES - of course to maintain and sustain healthy growth, there are other resources that plants need to survive.

Such as:

- (i) **Water (3.15, 3.16, 3.17)** – this is essential, adequate and appropriate amounts of water are required relevant to the specific plants. You might like to think about this in relation to **workforce (3.18)** – does your organisation have adequate and appropriate levels of staffing?
- (ii) **Fertiliser/compost (3.19)** – Composting is the natural process of recycling organic matter, such as leaves and food scraps, into a valuable fertilizer that can enrich soil and plants. What **resources (3.20)** can you tap into to enrich your organisation? Staff training and professional development might be one consideration.
- (iii) **Sunlight (3.21)** – Plants need to be positioned in the right space to provide for adequate and appropriate access to sunlight to facilitate growth. You might like to think about how you can position your organisation to ensure adequate **funding (3.22)** and support from the Department?
- (iv) Other value-add resources such as **positive talk (3.23)** or even singing has been found to aid plant health and growth. What initiatives do you invest in to help build a positive workplace culture? How do you **recognise and celebrate achievements (3.24)**?

So, when you go home, if you want these plants to thrive and flourish, you will need to consider all of these things. Thank you for participating in this activity, we hope it has provided some time to reflect on your own organisation and things to consider to "plant for success" – throughout the day you will have opportunities to share those thoughts, ideas, potential concerns, and opportunities for action that may have arisen during this activity.

Clean up: Please place your potted creation in the centre of the table. Pack up your tools and any unused materials into the bag provided. There are wipes on the table for you to wipe your hands.

We hope you find this a useful resource tool within your organisation.

Kindest regards from Michelle, Kay, Julie, and Maria