Who Am I Outside of Survival?



Session 11

A 60-minute adult education session about identity, interests, strengths and a small experiment beyond getting through.

The work today

Notice a part of yourself that deserves room, connect it to an ordinary action and plan one accessible experiment.

Progress is progress

Trying something small can count without proving talent, productivity or a whole new identity.

Before you lead

Audience and scope

Adults 18+, approximately 4-10 participants. Facilitators need group skills, competence appropriate to their role, and access to safeguarding and emergency procedures. This is original recovery education, not a validated treatment, diagnosis, crisis service or substitute for individual care.

Preparation outside the hour

Read the guide and notes. Print participant pages 1-8, prepare slides, pens and a clock, and verify local support contacts. Orient new members beforehand. Explain the setting’s privacy limits; group confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Know how to offer private support.

Participation and access

Offer fiction, private writing, drawing, listening or passing. Read prompts aloud and offer a scribe with consent. No personal history, diagnosis, substance details, contact, movement, performance or completed worksheet is required. Adapt for language, disability, energy, caregiving and resources.

Topic-specific preparation

Avoid forced strengths praise or personal trauma narratives. Offer fiction and concrete ordinary examples. Identity can include culture, roles, disability, gender, faith or other aspects chosen by the person; do not assign meaning or demand disclosure.

The 60-minute run sheet

00-05 / Welcome / slides 1-2

Participant page 1. Explain choices and offer a brief optional check-in.

05-13 / Fictional situation / slides 3-4

Participant page 2. Read the example and discuss the stated questions. Avoid a round of personal histories.

13-23 / Teaching and model / slides 5-6

Use Quinn’s concrete interest and small safe experiment. Introduce page 3 as optional exploration, not forced positive thinking.

23-38 / Individual work / slides 7-8

Participant pages 3-5, about five minutes per page. Read prompts and offer private help with consent.

38-50 / Rehearsal / slides 9-10

Page 6 pair or solo practice. Page 7 is a creative alternative within the same block. Two minutes setup, three minutes each role, two minutes revision, two minutes reflection.

50-57 / Actual-week step / slide 11

Revisit page 5. Add timing, access, support and a fallback. No public promise or pledge.

57-60 / Close / slide 12

Offer optional page 8 follow-up and a voluntary takeaway or pass. State actual continuing support and its limits.

Opening words

Suggested script

When life has been about getting through the day, a question like What do you enjoy can feel enormous. You do not have to discover your purpose in this room. We are looking for one part of you that could have a little more room, even if the honest answer starts with I am not sure yet.

Group agreements

No ranking goals, jobs, talents or recovery identities. No pressure to use or reject a label, be inspirational, disclose identity, or turn lived experience into a career. Ask before suggesting.

Check-in

Ask: Would a neutral example, an interest, an ordinary role or listening fit today? Passing and I do not know are welcome.

Quinn’s blank answer

Original fictional scenario

Someone asks Quinn what they do for fun. Quinn thinks of work, appointments and keeping things from falling apart, then feels blank. Quinn used to enjoy fixing small household items but worries that trying again will be embarrassing. Money and time are limited. No emergency is described.

Questions

What does the blank answer tell us, and what does it not tell us? What small interest could Quinn explore without buying supplies or proving skill? What practical limit needs respecting?

Facilitator stance

Do not interpret uncertainty as resistance, failure or a diagnosis. Quinn does not need a new job, a public recovery story or a heroic purpose. A modest interest can coexist with support needs and responsibilities.

A part of me worth exploring

Notice something specific

A past interest, an ordinary quality you try to practice, a chosen role, or simple curiosity can be a starting point. Use an example of an action rather than demanding a list of flattering traits.

Make room without an identity test

An experiment asks whether something fits. It does not prove worth or require a permanent label. A person can keep, change or decline a recovery identity or story in ordinary introductions.

Respect actual limits

Choose a safe, low-cost version that fits time, access and energy. If the interest requires tools, training or physical risk, use an appropriate safe alternative or qualified guidance. No purchase or performance is required.

A completed example

Quinn’s starting point

Quinn is curious about working with their hands again. The next step can be noticing an interest rather than repairing an appliance or proving competence.

A small experiment

Quinn sets aside ten minutes Saturday to sketch a simple project idea using paper already available. No electrical, sharp-tool or other hazardous work is part of the group activity.

What to learn

Afterward Quinn asks: Was there anything interesting? What would make a next attempt more accessible? Not enjoying it is information. Quinn can choose a different experiment without a verdict about identity.

Lead the individual pages

Page 3 / More than the hardest chapter

Help identify concrete actions without forced praise. Blank or uncertain answers are valid.

Page 4 / An experiment small enough to try

Keep the experiment safe, low-cost and accessible. Do not require a purchase, new job, public identity or risky tool use.

Page 5 / My first experiment

Specify timing and something to notice afterward. Make adjustment possible without grading talent.

Support without taking over

Ask permission before suggesting. Keep unresolved needs visible. A resource gap or an unfinished page needs curiosity and appropriate practical support, not a lecture about motivation. Participants may stay with the fictional example.

Practice without a performance

12-minute sequence

Two minutes to choose pair or solo; three minutes each role; two minutes to revise; two minutes to reflect. Partners use fiction. The creative alternative replaces this practice, not extra time.

Speaker role

Practice a short ordinary introduction or a private sentence about an interest. No personal recovery account.

Listener role

Ask a respectful optional question about the stated interest. Do not demand proof, performance, explanation of identity or a success story.

Solo option

Write an introduction or private sentence, remove pressure to impress, and leave any label undecided.

A page with room to be unfinished

Same practice block

Create an unfinished idea page with words or sketches for something that might deserve room. This replaces pair practice.

Example

Words: curious, hands-on, ten minutes. A sketch of a simple project idea. Next step: see whether I want another ten minutes.

Reflection

Is this mine to choose? Does the plan assume money, equipment, physical capacity or confidence I may not have?

Privacy and choice

No one must show the page, read aloud, send a message, revisit a distressing memory or complete the activity. Offer the fictional example, neutral drawing, observation or a pass.

When more support is needed

Identity and privacy

Respect chosen names, roles, cultural identities and disclosure limits. Do not impose recovery labels, teachings or a life story. No one must educate the group about an identity.

Safety and access

Experiments must fit the person’s health, access, responsibilities and environment. No risky demonstrations or pressure to spend, work, socialize or contact unsafe people. Practical limits deserve practical support.

Ongoing distress

If loss of interest, shame or distress persists or disrupts daily life, offer appropriate professional or recovery support. This session is not a diagnostic tool or a substitute for care. Immediate safety needs take priority.

Close and prepare the pilot

Closing words

What part of you might deserve a little more room? You can pass. A small experiment can count without deciding who you will be forever. Progress is progress. Mile or a Millimeter.

Voluntary feedback

Was the activity understandable? Could you find a realistic next action or question? What felt uncomfortable, inaccessible or unrealistic? Check timing and access. Do not collect sensitive personal stories for marketing or treat feedback as evidence of clinical effectiveness.

Sources and authorship

Broad background sources are listed in Sources-and-Review.md and relevant slide notes. Reviewed October 28, 2026. Original scenarios, scripts and learning sequence by Belle Morey / Progress is Progress LLC. No agency endorsement.

Release status

Author-review pilot. Belle’s review, appropriate professional review, local response and referral checks, and a suitable timing and usefulness pilot should precede commercial release. www.progresscounselingprograms.com.