

Section 2: Group Dynamics & Emotional Impact

Why Group Dynamics Matter in Facilitation

- In sessions on sensitive topics (like mental health), emotions are deeply present and influence participation.
- As a facilitator, your role is not just to guide tasks, but also to read and respond to emotional forces in the group.
- Understanding how groups form and evolve helps you anticipate points of tension and intervene wisely.

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Group development stages

Tuckman's Model — Overview

- Bruce Tuckman (1965) introduced a framework of **group development stages**: *Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing*.
- Read more at this link: [Tuckman's stages of group development](#)
- These stages are common in small group work, including facilitation settings.

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Group development stages

Stage	Typical Group Emotions and Behaviours
Forming	Uncertainty, politeness, looking to the facilitator; people figuring out roles.
Storming	Conflict arises, power dynamics, resistance, role negotiation.
Norming	Cohesion builds, trust grows, shared norms, more open interpersonal connection.
Performing	The group works efficiently, focus on tasks, high mutual support.
Adjourning	Closure, reflection, sometimes sadness or relief as the group disbands.

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Activity: Stage Identification

Instructions for Learners:

1. Read the following two brief scenarios :

- **Scenario A:** A newly formed support group meets for the first time; participants are polite but reserved; few contributions.
- **Scenario B:** In a later meeting, two participants disagree strongly about how to raise awareness in their community; another person is silent.

2. For each scenario:

1. Select which **Tuckman stage** the group is likely in.
2. Identify at least one **emotion or tension** that is likely present (e.g., uncertainty, frustration).
3. Suggest **one facilitation move** (intervention) you would use to support the group in that moment.

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Strategy Planning — Your Tools as a Facilitator

Task:

- Based on what you have learned: write **two concrete strategies** you will use in your next facilitation to respond to group dynamics or emotional tension.
- Also note: **one challenge** you expect in implementing them, and how you plan to overcome that.