

Feminist School

An experiential learning experience for young feminists

Pilot by Gender at Work & UNGEI



Starting April 7TH

UNGEI - GENDER AT WORK FEMINIST SCHOOL FOR YOUTH GENDER EQUALITY ACTIVISTS

Learning Outcomes Report

August 2021

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Feminist School – an overview

Feminist School was an action and peer-based learning programme based on experiential learning. It comprised a cohort of 26 young feminist activists working in the gender justice and education space. These participants were the trailblazers exploring this programme and Gender at Work's new virtual learning space.

Feminist School went through a six-week journey of learning Gender at Work conceptual tools and approaches.



These tools were taught in the context of being a young feminist organizer in the gender and education community. Each session welcomed a Gender at Work Associate who has worked with these approaches. Together, the participants and facilitators explored self and collective care, starting with a holistic activity to ground participants. We acknowledged that this world is stressful, and thus Feminist School aimed to be a space to recharge, grow and connect with oneself and each other. We intended to create a brave and informal space for learning, sharing, and empathy.

Objective

- For young feminist activists and networks to advance their work through experiential learning to achieve gender equality in and through education.
- For young feminist activists and networks to acquire tools and approaches to strengthen their gender education work by helping them to analyze and navigate the power dynamics that come with gender and age.
- Gender at Work and UNGEI create a brave space to test our virtual learning platform
- Older and younger activists foster intergenerational thought leadership and connection

Online Platform

This pilot used Gender at Work's online hub and Zoom and tools such as Jamboard, mural, canva etc. Gender at Work is an international feminist knowledge network that works to end discrimination against women and build cultures of inclusion. Gender at Work Institute is G@W's online knowledge and learning hub. It has been developed based on G@W's feminist principles and practises to explore how we can bring about transformative change on gender equality. The Gender at Work Institute intends to support an online learning community for feminist activists, change-makers, practitioners, movement builders.

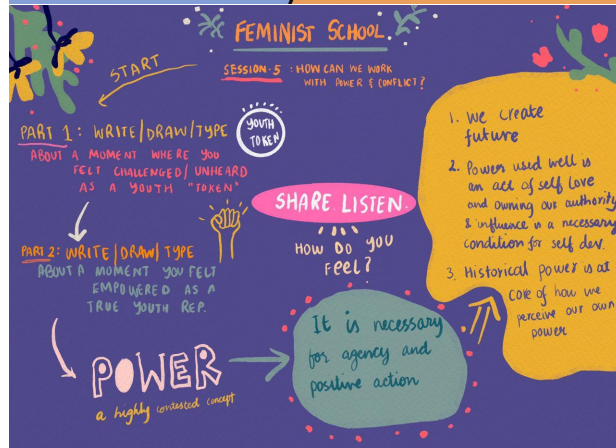
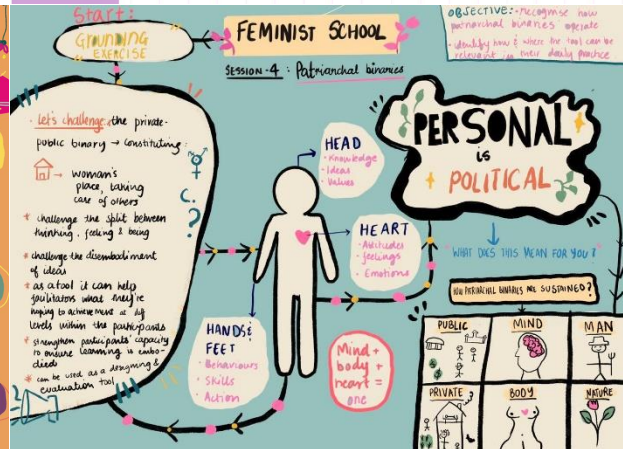
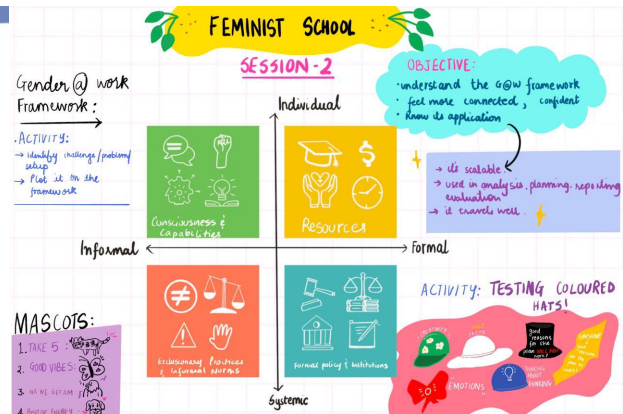
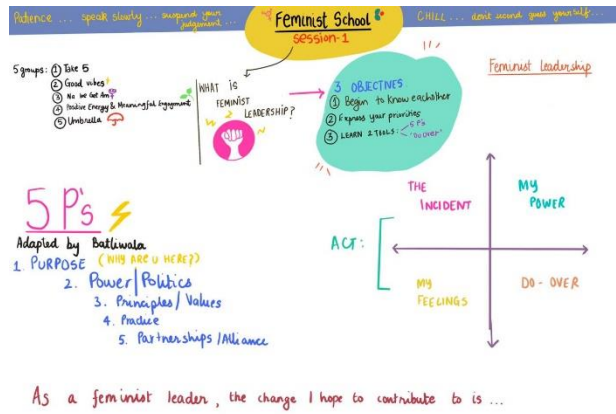
The Participants



There were 26 participants from across the globe: young feminist activists who are a part of UNGEI through the GAC or through Transform Education and those who work with G@W. They are passionate activists, advocates, and policy influencers who are mobilizing and co-creating solutions. They come from diverse backgrounds and experiences.

Overview of the sessions:

Feminist school was divided into seven sessions intended to explore gender and power analysis tools and frameworks and individual feminist principles and principles of self and collective care. All of these were set within the contexts of the activist's advocacy and campaigning journeys and were closed with a session exploring tools of learning and monitoring our collective engagement, as well as a celebration of the journey. Below are a few graphic recordings showcasing the overview of feminist school:



(Please click on the images to see them in full size.)

Assessment Methodology

This report presents the learning outcomes of Feminist School as reported and observed by participants. The G@W-UNGEI facilitation team design two main methods to assess the learning outcomes:

- A pre-course baseline survey and post-course endline survey
- Peer feedback among participants

The baseline survey was administered online prior to the course, and 14 participants participated from 9 countries (11 self-identified as female/woman, 1 as male, 1 as 'still out there,' 2 no response). Nineteen (19) participants from 11 countries¹ filled in the endline survey administer in real-time in the final course assessment session (15 self-identified as female/woman, 3 as male/man, 1 as non-binary).

In the peer assessment, participants provided appreciative feedback to their peers in the 5-6 person cohorts they had worked within break-out groups throughout the course. Participants were invited to share verbally and in writing on a jamboard slide their responses for each of the members of their cohort to the following questions:

Over the course of Feminist School:

- Something I learned from you is ...
- Something I saw you learning or something I saw in changing in you is ...

These methods generated data that captures to what extent participants learned concepts, tools and approaches of relevance to feminist activists, particularly with regard to education sector advocacy and campaigning. In addition, the UNGEI-Gender at Work facilitation team consistently documented their own observations of which approaches and methods contributed to these learning outcomes with a view to integrating these insights into future online courses of this nature.

Attendance

The consistency of participants' attendance throughout the six sessions of the School offers a good proxy indicator for the relevance of the course's content for young feminist activists. Twenty-six (26) activists registered for Feminist School. Two failed to attend any sessions, and one attended only one session. Of the twenty-three (23) remaining participants, nineteen (19) attend 100% of the sessions. Three others missed only one session, and one missed two sessions. In the post-course survey, seven (7) respondents identified scheduling

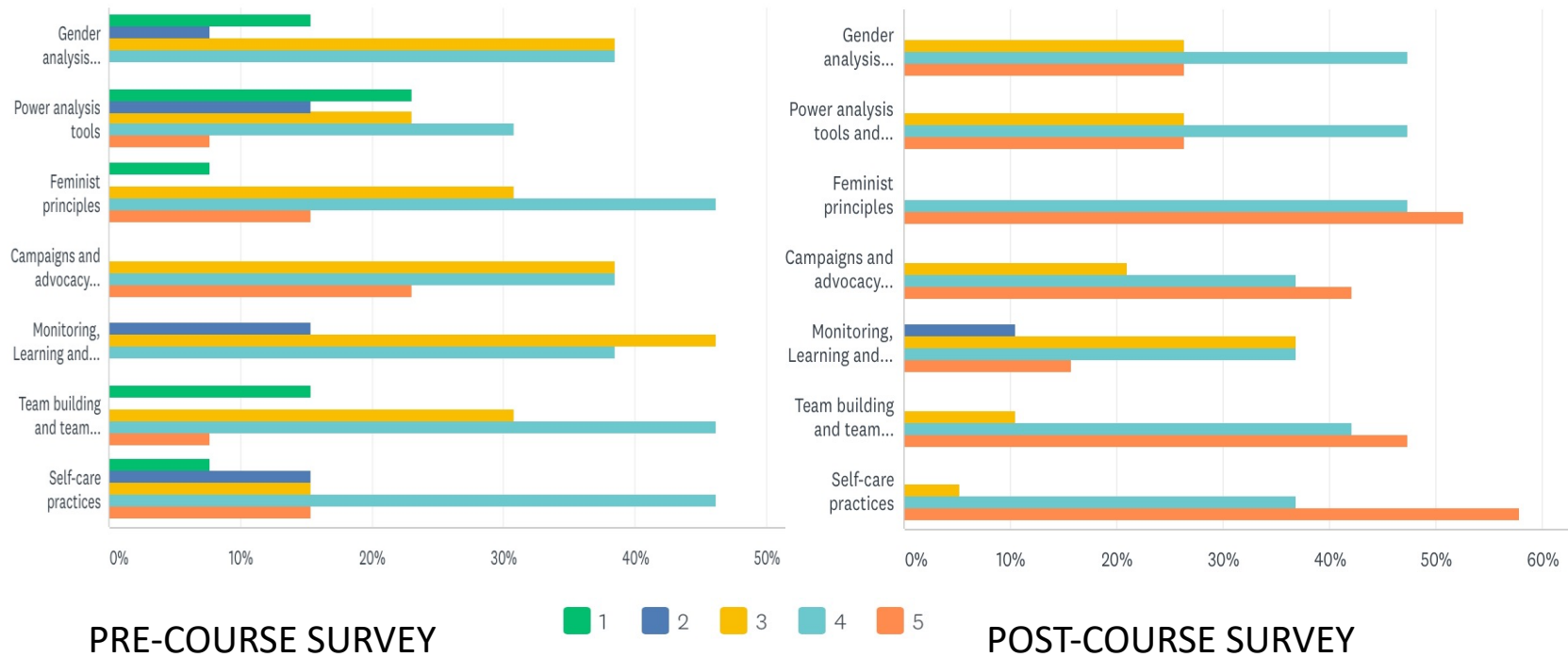
¹ Participants were based in the Philippines, India, Pakistan, Kenya, Uganda, Mozambique, Zambia, Cameroun, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Netherlands, UK, Guyana and the United States.

problems as a challenge they faced during the course. Despite this challenge, the exceptionally high and consistent rate of participant attendance demonstrates participants' strong interest and commitment to the course.

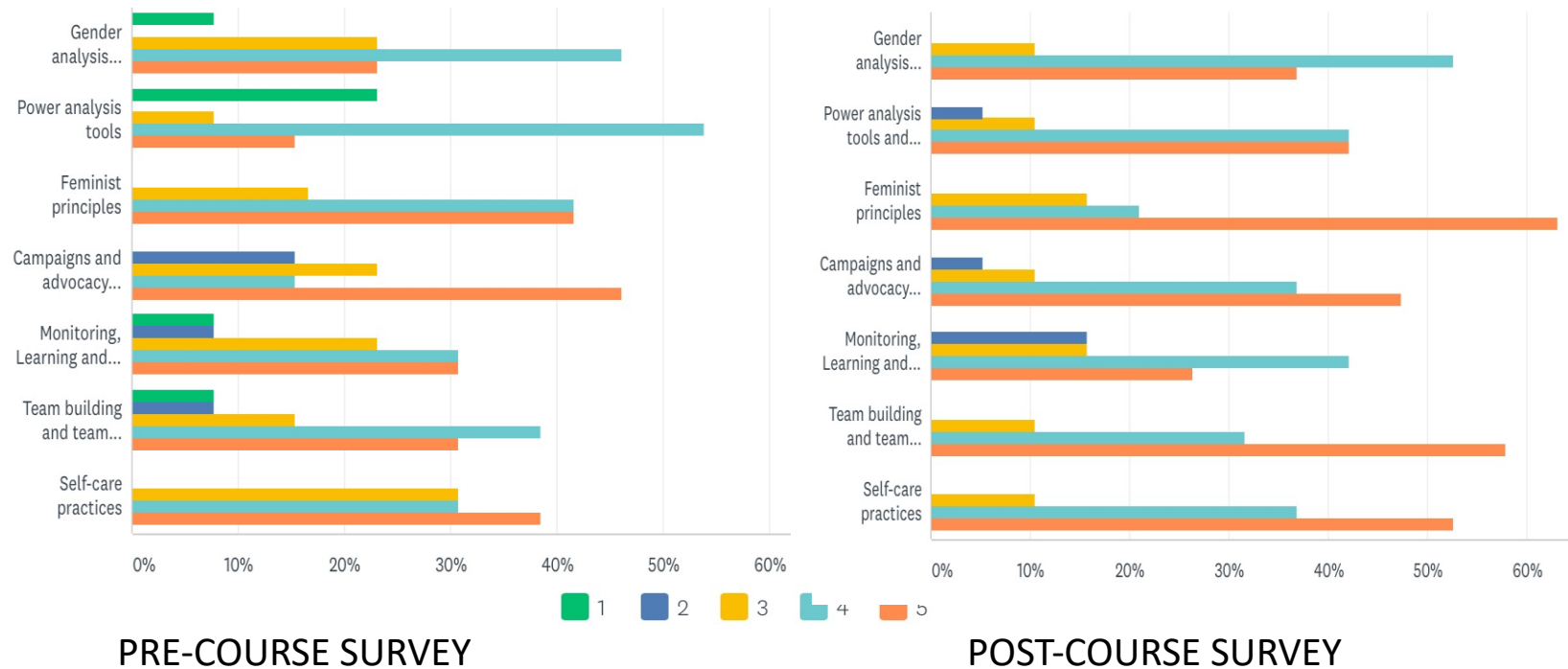
Baseline and Endline Survey Results

The baseline and endline surveys asked participants to rank (on a scale from 1 to 5) their level of familiarity, confidence, and likelihood of using key concepts and approaches explored during the course. Comparing the results from these questions across the two surveys provides a strong indication of the impact of the course content for participants. The following tables summarize these results.

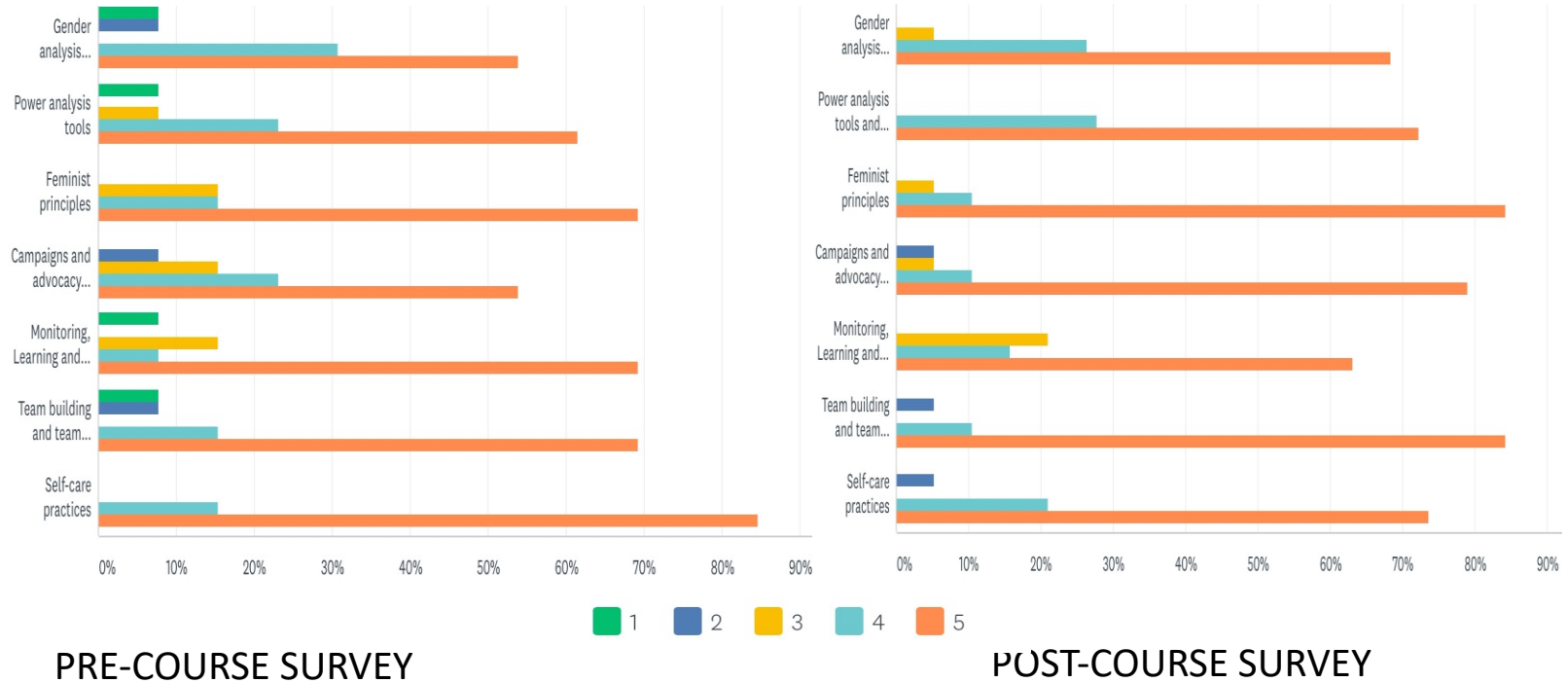
Familiarity with different concepts, tools and approaches covered in Feminist School



Confidence to use different concepts, tools and approaches covered in Feminist School



Likelihood you would use different concepts, tools and approaches covered in Feminist School



Participants reported an increase in their familiarity, confidence, and likelihood of using the tools, concepts, and approaches explored through feminist school across the board. Participants' familiarity increased the most (average 17% overall), with smaller increases in confidence (9%) and likelihood to use (5%). Power analysis tools and approaches showed the greatest increase in familiarity (23%) and confidence to use (17%) from relatively low baseline rankings. Feminist principles received the highest ranking in the endline survey for familiarity, confidence and likelihood to use, with an overall comparative increase from a baseline of 25% increase in familiarity. While participants did not show a significant increase in likelihood or familiarity with campaigning tools, they did indicate an increased awareness of bringing gender analysis and power into their campaigning and advocacy. They also showed a significant increase of 31 % in familiarity with self-care practices and an increase of 10 % in the likelihood of prioritizing self-care. These are very important indicators for young feminist activists whose primary form of advocacy during COVID-19 has been digital lobbying and who have reported tendencies of burnout over the pandemic years.

These self-ranking results are supported by participants' responses to other open questions in the end line survey. In response to "how do you think the course is going to help your work and activism?" eight (8) respondents referred to their enhanced understanding and use of feminist principles and approaches in their activism. For example:

I have learned so much about how important it is to remain grounded as in individual so that when I bring myself to a group or to a movement like feminism; I understand my purpose and I am aware of my politics and even my privileges as well. I will apply that awareness to my work and I will also always remember the "head, heart, hands and feet" concept and I've done some of my own personal learning on it to take it back to spaces I organize.

Even on Day 1 of the session, the course made helped me a lot. Feminist school helps me appreciate the importance of the collective movement and collective care. It's time we assert our rights and visualize the future of feminism. It helped me commit to organizing myself and working as one towards gender equality. Whatever learnings I gained after every session, I am sharing it with my colleagues and they are happy and eager to know about this course more.

It has been a wonderful learning experience and I am in a better position to share why we need feminist activists, what feminism means and how to involve different sections of people and how best to handle each group I work with in regards to feminism.

[I will] incorporate a much broader participatory feminist approach to my work and be more critical of the decisions I make and how they reflect my feminist principles.

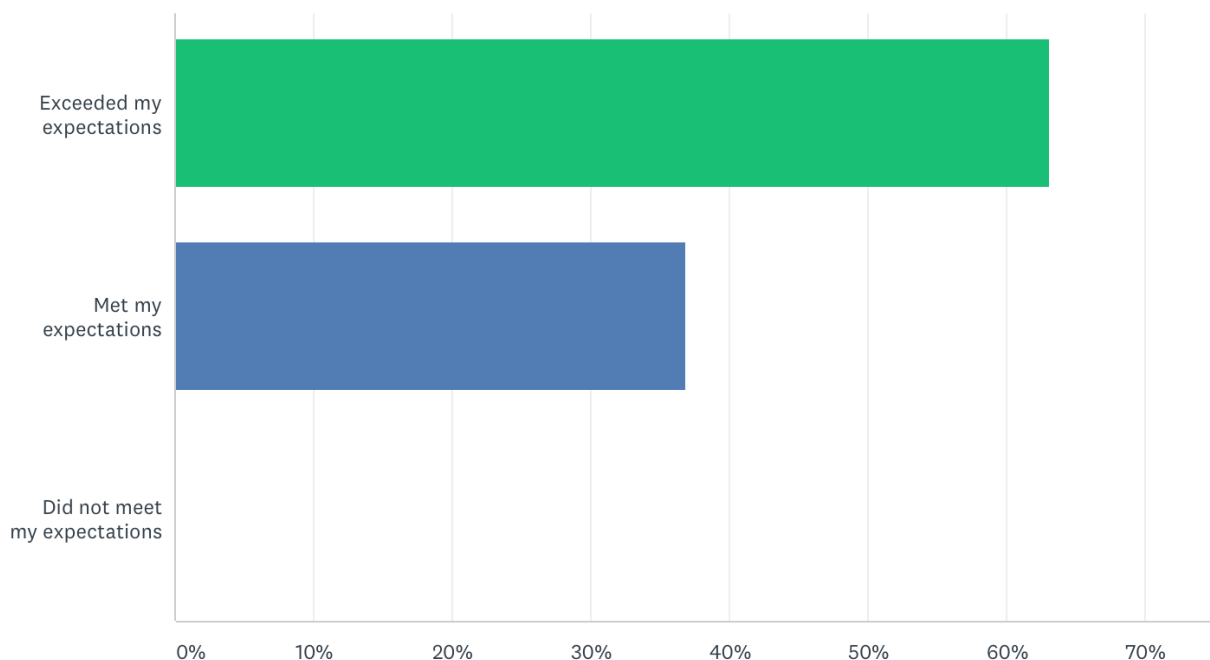
In response to the question “what is the single most important thing you learned during Feminist School?” gender analysis, power analysis, campaign and advocacy planning and self-care practices were mentioned most frequently by participants. Individuals named some of the specific concepts and tools presented during the course. The most frequently mentioned concepts and tools are:

- the Gender at Work Framework,
- the ‘5Ps’ of feminist leadership,
- patriarchal binaries,
- the ‘5Cs’ of campaigning and advocacy

Overall, participants expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the content, methods and interactions of Feminist School in the endline survey. Over 60% of participants responded that Feminist School exceeded their expectations, and over 70% of participants strongly agreed with the statement that “Feminist School was sufficiently participatory and inclusive.”

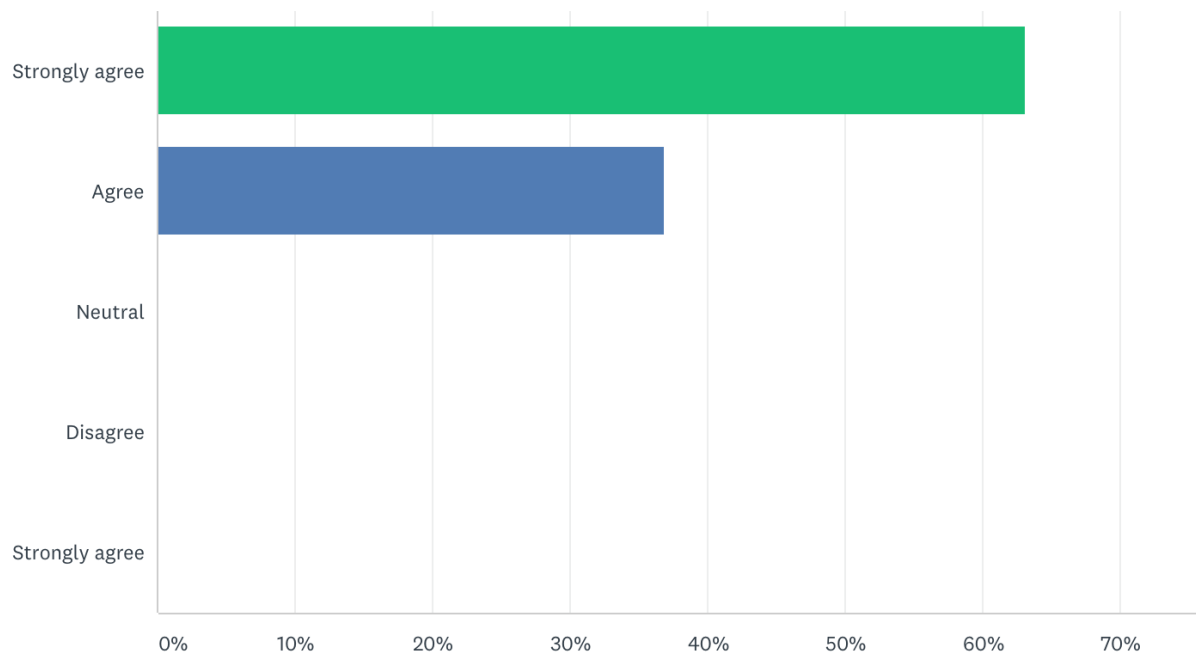
Overall, Feminist School

Answered: 19 Skipped: 0



Feminist school was sufficient participatory and interactive:

Answered: 19 Skipped: 0



In response to open questions, participants expressed appreciation for the opportunity to connect with other young feminist activists across the globe and the comfortable, interactive online learning space created by the facilitation team. For example:

This course gave me an opportunity to interact and learn the work done by young feminists across different continents. Drawing inspiration from how young emerging feminists are working and including that in my life.

I would like to thank you all for this amazing course. It will be really nice if other people can have these sessions as well. It is truly magical. I hope there will be an opportunity for us to meet in person soon.

Nothing shared here is insignificant. This really boosted my confidence.

Peer-based Assessment Results

Some examples of responses to the question “Something I saw you learning or something I saw in changing in you is ...” are as follows:

- *[You have] grown to be bolder to take on the role of rapporteur.*
- *I have seen you changing and becoming more open in conversations. Very very nice.*
- *[I observed us] changing: little bit like 2 young feminists from different parts of the world. We could connect more and communicate better.*
- *[I observed] changes- we build connection/bridge was built between two feminist sisters across the globe.*
- *Be the change you want to be, you are more jolly as the day went by. More talkative..*

Examples of responses to the question “Something I learned from you is ...” are:

- *You are deep listener and able to connect with people. I was able to understand and connect discussions points to social realities from your insights sharing. Thanks!*
- *Something I've learned from all of you is that feminism is so so so much more than just a movement but it is catharsis, relief, making friends, finding hope, self and collective empowerment and I have all of you to thank for that.*
- *To be consciously thoughtful, I learnt from you, you think about others very much.*
- *I learned from you – Giving yourself the love that you deserve regardless if other people show up.*
- *[I] Learnt- Ideas of resistance, in the midst of everything you seemed to have figured it all out. It was nice for me.*
- *[I have become a] better listener with Feminist school → More benefit to listen than to talk.*
- *I've learned throughout the feminist school the weight and value of real experiences and narratives, the importance of collective care, and feminist solidarity.*
- *[Learned by the whole] team*
 - *Empathy*
 - *Leadership*
 - *Despite challenges we showed commitment*
 - *Aligned in principles although all over the world*
 - *Keeping ourselves accountable*
- *The stories we keep to ourselves are the ones we should share as others can be struggling too → Let's ease our pain.*
- *I learned that visual learning is very important and relevant when organizing and strategizing. I learned that understanding politics and the role it plays in education is also equally important.*
- *[I] learned from you the amazing work that you're doing for gender equality. It is so inspiring and powerful. You educated us on the power of learning and education to champion girls' rights.*
- *Thank you for understanding and being patient with me. I felt privileged to share this space with you all, your stories of courage, struggle, aspirations and dream have inspired me a lot. This is a global movement of feminist leaders who care and support each other in their personal and professional journeys!*

- *I learned that the world is globally connected even in our own unique experiences!*
- *Only through young feminist organizing such as this one, can we truly uphold feminist principles and values.*

Learnings and future steps

In the survey, we also asked the participants to indicate some of the challenges they faced during feminist school to provide a better and enhanced experience for future cohorts:

Challenges participants faced over the course of Feminist School included:

- Scheduling and availability (8 responses)
- Connectivity and technical problems (6 responses)
- Information overload (1 responses)
- No problems (5 responses)

Participants offered a number of suggestions for how to improve Feminist School, including:

- More opportunities to interact across cohort groups (7 responses)
- A more accessible online portal (3 responses)
- Longer sessions (2 responses)
- More sessions (1 response)
- Sessions led by participants (1 response)

Based on these responses and as a part of our internal learning process, we organized a series of learning and future planning meetings with the facilitators and the first cohort of feminist school. These meetings have resulted in a collective learning and future planning document which outlines the different hopes and future(s) of feminist schools, to be moderated and catered for different audiences, contexts and groups of participants. We hope to collectively foster future collaborations with the first cohort, their stakeholders, the Gender at Work and UNGEI teams. Some of our learnings have also been around creating increased opportunities for peer-learning and individual mentoring. Feminist school is a space for co-learning, campaigning and shared reflections, and we intend to bring that same magic to future feminist schools(s).

Conclusions

This assessment indicates that participants reported and observed notable individual and collective learning with regard to feminist principles, concepts, tools and approaches of relevance to young gender equality activists in diverse settings. The fact that individuals named many different concepts and tools as most useful to them in their work suggests that

the varied course content offered ‘something for everyone.’ Participants’ comments also suggest that Feminist School contributed to creating a dynamic community of learners and activists across five continents. Participants’ consistency in attendance and enthusiastic participation throughout the course not only contributed to the create a rich learning environment but also demonstrated the relevance of the content and facilitation methods for young feminist activists. Participants also expressed a strong desire for more opportunities to come together and replicate Feminist School in other spaces and with more young activists in their networks.

Feminist school created an open, creative, safe and inclusive space for participants and facilitators to explore their feminist principles, power, self-care and intersectionalities. It provided a space for mutual learning and developing shared understanding(s) of deep structures and gender and power analysis. Participants and facilitators alike were able to learn from each other and brainstorm ways of bringing these new learnings to their respective campaigning and advocacy commitments and contexts and all this while centring self-care and its importance for individuals and feminist collectives.

Annex

Graphic Session Overviews

Patience ... speak slowly ... suspend your judgement ...

CHILL ... don't second guess yourself ...

Feminist School session-1

- 5 groups:
- ① Take 5
 - ② Good vibes
 - ③ Na we Get Am
 - ④ Positive Energy & Meaningful Engagement
 - ⑤ Umbrella

WHAT IS
FEMINIST
LEADERSHIP?



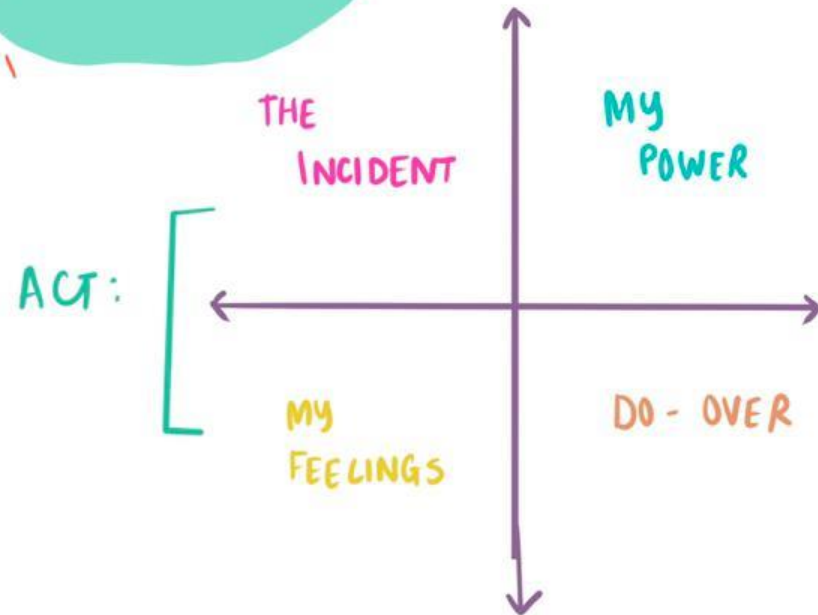
- 3 OBJECTIVES:
- ① Begin to know each other
 - ② Express your priorities
 - ③ LEARN 2 TOOLS: '5 P's', 'DO OVER'

Feminist Leadership

5 P's

Adapted by Batliwala

- 1. PURPOSE (WHY ARE U HERE?)
- 2. Power/Politics
- 3. Principles/Values
- 4. Practice
- 5. Partnerships/Alliance



As a feminist leader, the change I hope to contribute to is ...

FEMINIST SCHOOL

SESSION - 2

Gender @ work Framework:

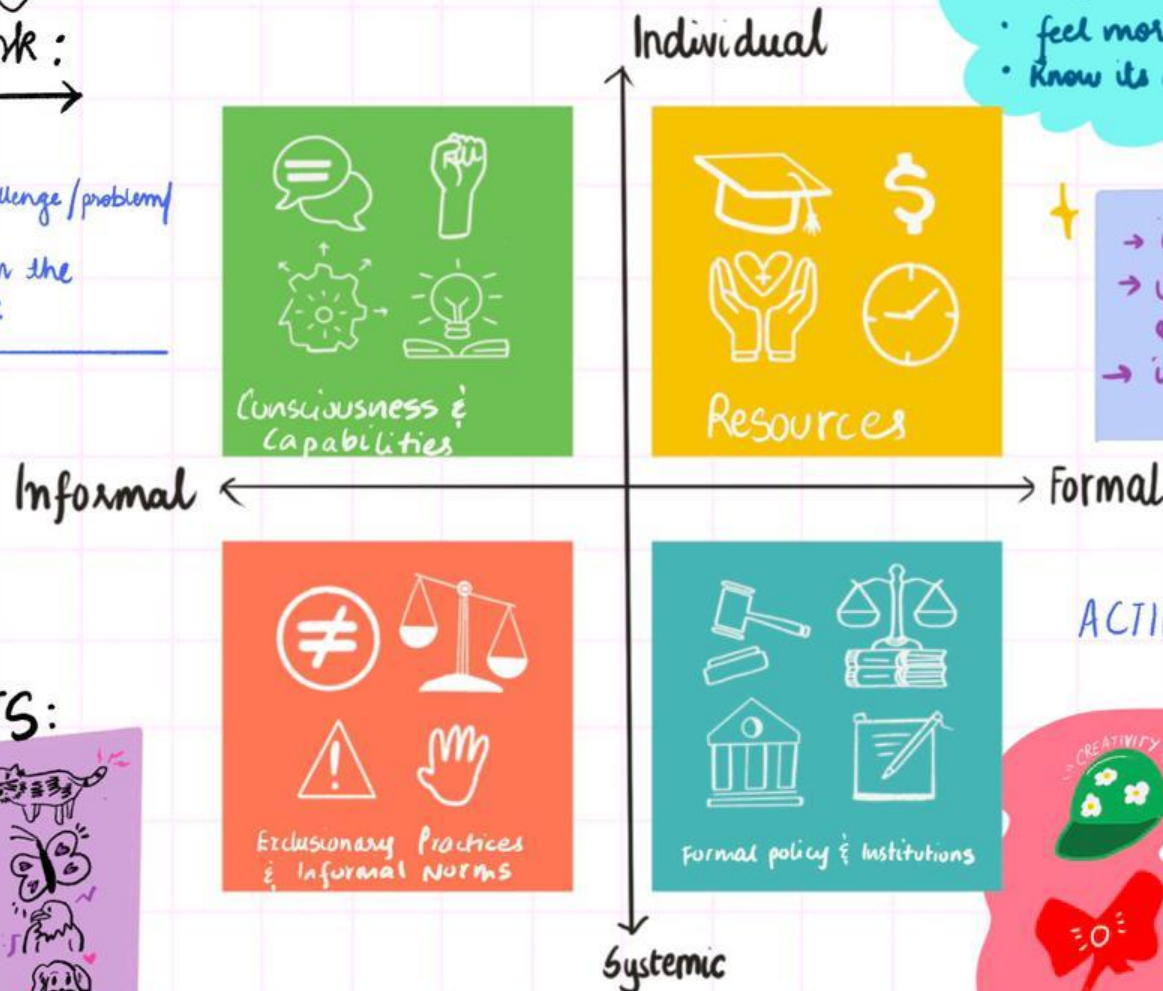
ACTIVITY:

- Identify challenge / problem / setup
- Plot it on the framework

OBJECTIVE:

- understand the G@W framework
- feel more connected, confident
- know its application

→ it's scalable.
 → used in analysis, planning, reporting, evaluation
 → it travels well.



MASCOTS:

1. TAKE 5:
2. GOOD VIBES:
3. NA WE GETAM:
4. POSITIVE, ENERGY, MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT:
5. UMBRELLA:

ACTIVITY: TESTING COLOURED HATS!



FEMINIST SCHOOL

SESSION - 3

- G: Guiding
- U: Useful
- I: Inspiring
- D: Developmental
- E: Evaluable

FEMINIST PRINCIPLES

(By Catherine O. & Laren F. Klein)

- Rethink binaries
- Embrace Pluralism
- Examine Power
- Consider Context
- Legitimize Experiences
- make contributions of people visible

ACTIVITY:

SHARE YOUR PERSONAL PRINCIPLES

COLLECTIVE CARE

"CARE SHOULD BE ROOTED IN ALL PROCESSES"

-NATASHA

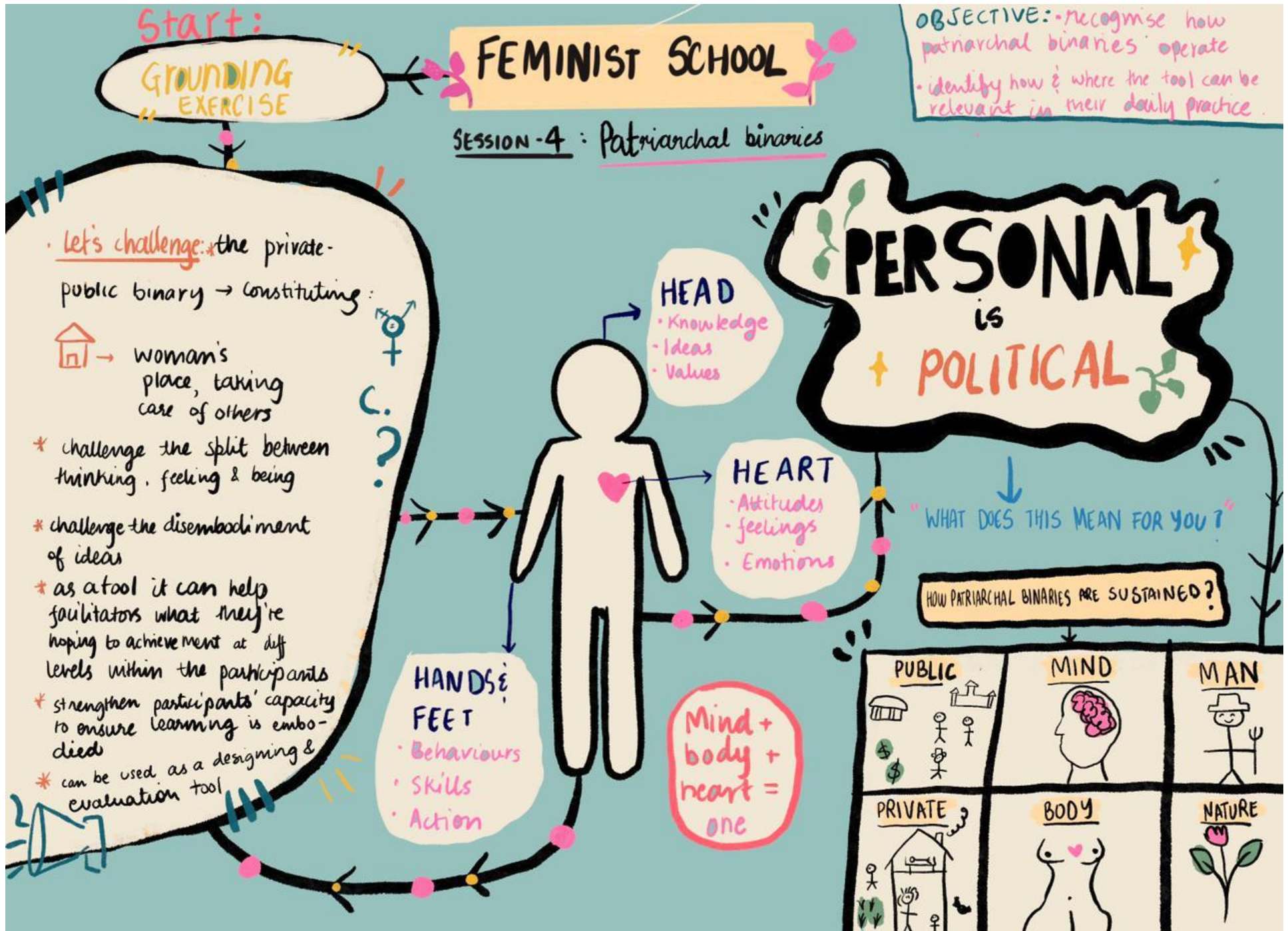
DAILY REMINDER: BE KINDER TO YOURSELF

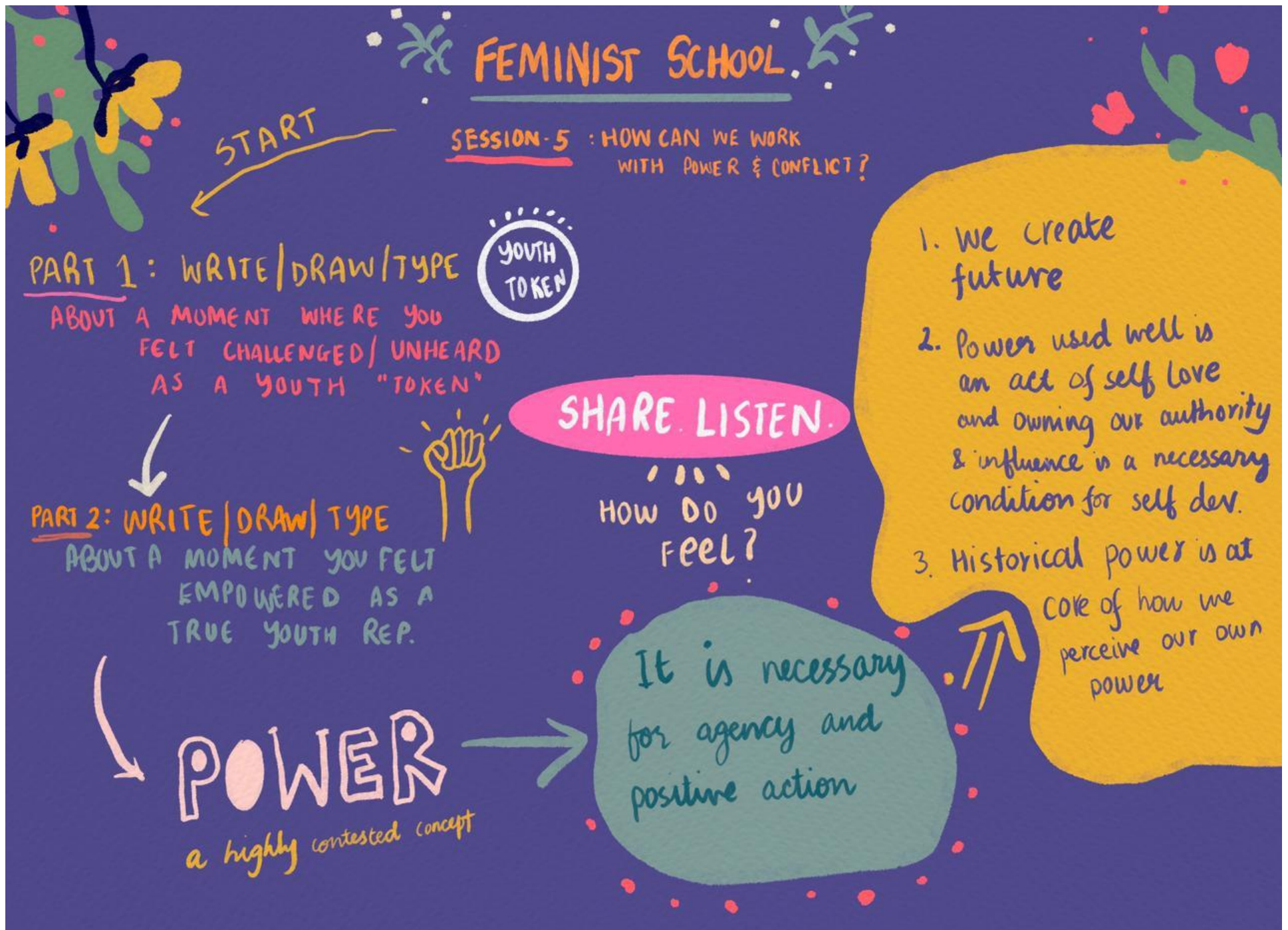
SELF CARE



- a cup of sleep
- a full cup of RESPECT.
- a tbsp of LOVE
- 4 tbsp of CHILL
- 10 spoons of RESISTANCE
- 5 tbsp of asking for help/support
- 1 CUP of social media detox
- 10 cups of self affirmation

SELF CARE RECIPE





FEMINIST SCHOOL

SESSION 6: HOW DO WE CREATE POWERFUL COMMUNICATIONS & ADVOCACY STRATEGIES?

CAMPAIGN: Shifting norms - people, societies, communities, institutions

ADVOCATE: Influencing policy - national, regional or global levels

COMMUNICATE: share the evidence of change - peer group, knowledge networks, decision makers, donors

THE 5 C's : from strategy to impact

1. COMMIT: IDENTIFY THE ISSUE

- IDENTIFY YOUR AUDIENCE
- HOW MUCH DO YOU HOPE TO CHANGE?



2. CO-CREATE: MAKE THE AUDIENCE PART OF YOUR JOURNEY

- CONTENT - AMPLIFYING THE VOICES OF CHANGE
- NARRATIVE OR VISUAL
- FEMINIST & INTERSECTIONAL APPROACH



3. CONVINCED/CHALLENGE

- POWER ANALYSIS
- IDENTIFY PATHWAY OF CHANGE
- CREATE A BEHAVIOUR ARC
- HOW TO TACKLE: DANGER THAT YOU TALK TO CONVERTED OR YOUR MSG IS TOO RADICAL FOR SOME PEOPLE.



4. CASCADE: TRANSLATING INTO CONCRETE PRODUCTS/PLATFORMS

- DESIGNING THE MESSAGE
- CHOOSING THE RIGHT MEDIA
- DIGITAL DIVIDE, BEWARE OF YOUR OWN POWER
- FREQUENCY OF MESSAGING.



5. CONSOLIDATE: UNDERSTAND THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF THE PROCESS

- TELL THE STORIES OF THE INTENDED EFFECT & AFTER STUDY IMPACT.
- CHANGE IS NOT EASY - MEASURING BEHAVIOUR IS NOT EASY.

