

Workshop facilitator kit

Version 2.0 · 60 minutes · for 5 to 25 people

What this workshop does

It helps a group do three things: name the pressures their community faces, notice the strengths it already has, and choose one strength to build next. It doesn't ask anyone to share anything personal, and it doesn't decide who is to blame.

What you need

Essential

- This script, printed or on a device
- The six posters, printed or handwritten on paper
- One handout per person, and pens
- A room where people can move around
- 60 minutes

Helpful

- A board or flip chart
- A phone to keep time

If you only have paper and pens, you can still run it.

The five pressures and six strengths

Pressure	What it looks like	The strength that answers it
Pushed out	People are moved, priced out or prevented from staying	Roots: ties to place, ownership, tenure
Written out	Language, history and culture are dropped, renamed or banned	Heritage: passing on language, memory and practice
Squeezed out	Livelihoods, businesses and land are taken or starved	Livelihood: income and assets the community controls
Worn down	Stigma, surveillance and fear wear people down	Voice: telling your own story, in your own media
Silenced	Leaders are removed, co-opted or made unsafe	Backbone: leadership spread across many people
Supports all five	Relationships with other communities and organisations	Coalition: relationships with other communities and organisations

Pressures can come from markets, policy, neglect or conflict, and often from several at once. This framework doesn't require anyone to prove intent. It helps people see what is happening and decide what to build.

Safety: read before every session

- **Ground rules for the room:** no names of people outside the room; no addresses or details that could identify someone; no photos or recordings; anyone can pass on any activity.
- **Don't keep records.** No sign-in sheet and no contact list. Don't collect handouts.
- **If your community faces surveillance, arrest or violence:**
 - Run the story-only version: sections 1, 2, 3 and 6.
 - Skip the private reflection.
 - Meet somewhere private, and don't advertise the session publicly.
 - If you can't be sure the room is safe, don't run the session.
- **If someone becomes distressed,** pause, acknowledge them and offer a break. You are not expected to be a counsellor. Know where local support is before you start.

Timing

Time	Section	What happens
0 to 5 min	1. Welcome	Purpose and ground rules
5 to 12 min	2. Three situations	Spot what they have in common
12 to 22 min	3. Pressures and strengths	Walk the posters
22 to 37 min	4. A real story	Read one story from the site, then discuss
37 to 47 min	5. Private reflection	Each person rates their own community's strengths, privately
47 to 57 min	6. One strength, one step	Choose a strength and a 30-day step, then pair up
57 to 60 min	7. Close	Where to go next

How to read this script

Plain text is for you to say aloud. *Italic text* tells you what to do. Reading straight from the page is fine.

Before the session

- Choose the story for section 4 from the [stories page](#), print it, and read it through once. For a first session, choose a story in a different place from your own community, so people can discuss it without feeling exposed.
- Put the six posters on the walls, with space in front of each.

Section 1: Welcome (0 to 5 minutes)

Stand where everyone can see you.

Thank you for coming. In the next hour we'll look at how communities come under pressure, and how they hold together. We'll learn a simple way to see what's happening, look at one real story, and each choose one thing to build.

A few ground rules so everyone feels safe. Please don't name people who aren't here, and don't share addresses or details that could identify anyone. No photos or recordings. You can pass on anything, at any time, without explaining why.

Pause. Ask if anyone wants to add a ground rule.

Section 2: Three situations (5 to 12 minutes)

I'm going to describe three situations. They are composites, not real places. Just listen.

Pause between each.

First. Rents on a high street double in five years. The families who ran the shops move away. The street keeps its name, but the people who gave it that name are gone.

Second. A school stops teaching the local language. A few years later, children can't follow their grandparents' stories.

Third. The person who organised the residents' meetings is offered a job in another city, and takes it. Nobody else knows how to book the hall or chase the council. The meetings stop.

Pause. Then ask:

What do these three have in common?

Take a few answers. Accept them all. Then:

They look different, but each is a way a community can be worn away without anyone announcing it. Pressure has a pattern. So does holding on. That's what we'll look at next.

Section 3: Pressures and strengths (12 to 22 minutes)

Walk to each poster in turn and read it.

There are five pressures. Each one has a strength that answers it.

Pushed out: people are moved, priced out or prevented from staying. The strength that answers it is **Roots:** ties to place, ownership and tenure.

Written out: language, history and culture are dropped, renamed or banned. The strength is **Heritage:** passing on language, memory and practice.

Squeezed out: livelihoods, businesses and land are taken or starved. The strength is **Livelihood:** income and assets the community controls.

Worn down: stigma, surveillance and fear wear people down. The strength is **Voice:** telling your own story, in your own media.

Silenced: leaders are removed, co-opted or made unsafe. The strength is **Backbone:** leadership spread across many people.

Coalition: relationships with other communities and organisations. It doesn't answer a single pressure. It makes every other strength go further.

The pressures often arrive together, and one makes another easier. The strengths work the same way: a community with strong roots finds it easier to keep its voice.

Now go and stand by the strength you think your community, or a community you know, is strongest in. You don't need to say why.

Give people a minute to move. Then:

Look around. Every strength in this room is already present somewhere. Now move to the strength you think is weakest.

Give them a minute.

With the people near you, take two minutes: what makes this strength hard to build? Speak in general terms. No names or places that could identify anyone.

After two minutes, ask one person from each poster for one sentence. Thank them, then ask everyone to sit down.

Section 4: A real story (22 to 37 minutes)

I'm going to read a short story from the Unerasable site. It's real, and every fact in it is sourced. Listen for the pressures and the strengths.

Read the story you chose: what happened, what held and what didn't. Read slowly. Then ask, leaving time for each question:

- Which pressures did you hear?
- Which strengths helped people hold on?
- What didn't work, and why do you think it didn't?
- What would you want to know before using any of their ideas here?

Don't correct people. If a pressure is missed, ask: "What about...?"

What I take from stories like this is that nobody held on by being lucky. They held on by building something, often slowly, before they needed it.

Section 5: Private reflection (37 to 47 minutes)

Skip this section if you're running the story-only version.

This part is private. Nobody will see what you write, and you don't have to share it.

On your handout, there are six strengths. For each one, give your community a mark from 1 to 5, where 1 means it barely exists and 5 means it's strong. Then write one word or phrase about why.

Don't write names or places. Write in a way that only you would understand, if you prefer.

Give people six or seven minutes. Stay quiet. Then:

Look at your marks. Circle the strength you'd most like to grow.

Section 6: One strength, one step (47 to 57 minutes)

Knowing the pattern doesn't change it. Building something does.

On your handout, write the strength you circled, and one small step you could take in the next 30 days. Keep it small enough to actually do. For example:

- **Roots:** find out who owns the buildings on your street.
- **Heritage:** record one conversation with an elder.
- **Livelihood:** list the local businesses your group could buy from.
- **Voice:** write down one story about your community, in your own words.
- **Backbone:** teach one other person a job that only you know how to do.
- **Coalition:** have one conversation with a group facing a similar pressure.

The toolkit on the site has more ideas, each with steps and risks.

After three minutes:

Now find a partner. Tell them your step, if you want to. Agree how you'll check in with each other in 30 days. Use a way you already have; don't write contact details on the handout.

Give them four minutes.

Section 7: Close (57 to 60 minutes)

The handout is yours. Take it home, or tear it up before you leave; please don't leave it behind.

Everything we used today is free. You can run this workshop yourself, adapt it, or translate it. The kit, the stories and the toolkit are all at [unerasable.world](https://www.unerasable.world).

Thank you for coming. Communities hold together because people choose to build things. You've each just chosen one.

End.

When things get difficult

Situation	What to do
Someone names a person or place that could put someone at risk	Stop gently: "Can I pause us there? Let's keep it general, as we agreed." Move on.
Someone becomes distressed	"Thank you for telling us. Would you like a moment?" Offer a break. Know local support options in advance.
Someone dominates	"Thank you. I'd like to hear from someone who hasn't spoken yet."
Someone blames a whole group of people	"Let's stay with what happened and what helps, rather than who people are."
Someone says the framework is wrong	"That's useful. What would you add or change?" Don't argue; note it and send it to us.
The group disagrees about whether a pressure is deliberate	"We don't need to settle that today. The question is what we build."
You're not sure the room is safe	Switch to the story-only version and skip the private reflection.

After the session

- Don't keep lists of who attended.
- In 30 days, check in with your own partner.
- Tell us what worked and what didn't, through the [contact page](#), without naming participants.

Where the idea comes from (for facilitators)

In 1944, the lawyer Raphael Lemkin coined the word "genocide". He described it not only as killing, but as "a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups" (Raphael Lemkin,

Axis Rule in Occupied Europe, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1944, p. 79).

In the book *Unerasable*, Kubair Shirazee uses the word nationocide for what happens when all five pressures are aimed at one group by people with the power to apply them. Most communities never face all five, and this workshop doesn't need you to use the word. Every community can build all six strengths.