She is not your rehab

PLAN INTERNATIONAL

For children and equality for girls

Create the Conditions

Overview:

A trauma-informed approach to working with young people around Gender Equality.

Create the Conditions is an 8-part digital resource designed to support facilitators in fostering safe, respectful, and trauma-informed spaces where young people can engage in meaningful conversations about gender, power, and equality.

Developed by She Is Not Your Rehab in partnership with Plan International UK, this self-paced course equips practitioners with the self-awareness, communication tools, and facilitation skills needed to be impactful role models.

Each module builds on the last, combining guided visualisations, reflective journaling, interactive exercises, and practical strategies to strengthen personal and professional growth.

This training emphasises that change starts within us, helping those who work with young people to explore their own beliefs, biases, and emotional triggers so they can show up with integrity, empathy, and accountability. Role modelling is a powerful way of teaching what it is actually like to learn and apply these concepts in real time. By embodying the principles of self-awareness, accountability, and respectful communication, you can lead by example and demonstrate to young people not just what to think, but how to engage critically, empathise, and grow.

What you will gain:

1. A deeper understanding of how childhood experiences shape beliefs about gender and power.
2. Strategies to build self-awareness and emotional regulation.
3. Tools for creating psychologically safe spaces where young people feel heard and valued.
4. Guidance on balancing accountability with empathy.
5. Techniques to set boundaries and prevent burnout.
6. Methods for fostering assertive yet compassionate conversations.
7. Approaches to navigating resistance and facilitating meaningful discussions on gender equality.

This course is designed to be engaging and flexible. Each module can be completed in approximately one hour and used either individually or in group training settings. Whether you work in youth development, social work, education, or community outreach, this resource will support you to create conditions where young people feel safe to explore, question, and grow. Because the conversations we have today shape the world of tomorrow.

Are you ready to create the conditions for change?

Module 1:
Understanding our past.

(20 min)

Reflective Journaling & Self-Inquiry

Continuing on from the visualisation, take 20 minutes to journal your thoughts. There are no right or wrong answers, this is your personal reflection space to engage with the prompts as deeply as you are able.

Journal Prompts:

What messages about gender and power did I learn as a child?

a. How were men expected to act?
b. How were women expected to act?
c. Did I know anyone who didn't fit into traditional boxes of gender?
d. What behaviours were praised?
e. Which were discouraged?

How did I see power used in relationships?

a. Who made decisions?
b. How was conflict handled?
c. Were apologies given freely or withheld?

Which of these beliefs do I still carry today?

a. Which feel true and helpful?
b. Which feel limiting or harmful?
c. Are there beliefs I hold that I have never questioned before?

How do these beliefs influence the way I work with young people?

a. Do I unintentionally reinforce any of these beliefs?
b. Do I consciously challenge harmful narratives?

(20 min)

Interactive Activity: Belief Mapping

This creative activity helps you visualise and express where your beliefs came from and how they show up today. Use whatever creative medium you desire and the number one rule is that there is no rules.

Instructions:

- Draw a good sized tree with three sections: Roots, Trunk, and Branches.
- In the Roots: Write down beliefs about gender, power, and relationships that you learned in childhood.
- In the Trunk: Write how these beliefs manifest in your actions, behaviours, and mindset today.
- In the Branches: Write the new beliefs you want to grow and nurture.

Reflection Questions After the Activity:

- What surprised you about your tree?
- Are there any roots (old beliefs) you want to uproot?
- What new branches (new beliefs) are most important for your personal growth?

Module 2:
Building Self-Awareness.

(20 min)

Reflective Journaling & Self-Inquiry

Continuing on from the visualisation, take 20 minutes to journal your thoughts. There are no right or wrong answers, this is your personal reflection space to engage with the prompts as deeply as you are able.

Journal Prompts:

1. What did I notice in my three reflections?
2. Was there a difference between who I was taught to be, how I present myself, and my truest self?
3. Where in my life do I feel most aligned with my true self?
4. Where do I feel I am performing or suppressing part of who I am?
5. What would it feel like to bring my actions and values into full alignment?

(20 min)

Interactive Activity: Self-Alignment Exercise

This creative activity helps you see how we can better align all the parts of ourselves. Use whatever artistic medium you desire but the number one rule is that there is no rules. Take your time and enjoy the process!

Instructions:

- Fold a piece of paper in half.
- On one side, write “How I present myself to the world.”
- On the other side, write “How I truly feel inside.”
- Open the paper. Compare the two: Where do these align?
- Think critically: Where do they differ?
- Create a list and identify as many actions needed to bring these closer together.

Reflection Questions After the Activity:

- What patterns did I notice?
- Where do I feel I am not showing up fully as myself?
- What’s one area of my life where I can practice more authenticity?

Module 3:
Creating Safe Spaces.

(20 min)

Reflective Journaling & Self-Inquiry

Continuing on from the visualisation, take 20 minutes to journal your thoughts. There are no right or wrong answers, this is your personal reflection space to engage with the prompts as deeply as you are able.

Journal Prompts:

When have I felt completely safe in a space?

a. What made that space feel safe?

b. Was it the people, the atmosphere, the rules, or something else?

What makes me feel unsafe or guarded in a space?

a. Are there specific words, behaviours, or dynamics that make me hesitant to open up?

How do I unintentionally contribute to or disrupt safety in spaces I facilitate?

What can I do to create more trust, safety, and inclusion in my work?

(20 min)

Interactive Activity: Designing a Safe Space

This creative activity helps participants visualise what a safe space looks and feels like so they can implement these elements in their work. Use whatever artistic medium you desire but the number one rule is that there is no rules. Take your time and enjoy the process!

Instructions:

- Imagine the ideal safe space for the young people you work with.
- Draw or describe what this space looks like to you.
- Consider the physical elements (lighting, seating, accessibility, etc.).
- Consider the emotional elements (tone, respect, inclusion, boundaries).
- Consider the social elements (who is in the space, how people interact).
- Write 3-5 guidelines that would ensure this space remains safe for everyone.

Reflection Questions After the Activity:

- What elements surprised you when designing your space?
- How can we intentionally create safety, beyond just physical settings?
- What’s one thing you can change in your approach today to make your spaces feel safer?

Module 4:
Accountability with Empathy.

(20 min)

Reflective Journaling & Self-Inquiry

Continuing on from the visualisation, take 20 minutes to journal your thoughts. There are no right or wrong answers, this is your personal reflection space to engage with the prompts as deeply as you are able.

Journal Prompts:

Why do I sometimes resist taking responsibility?

a. Is it fear of consequences?
b. Fear of disappointing others?
c. Fear of admitting fault?

How do I react when someone holds me accountable?

a. Do I get defensive?
b. Do I withdraw?
c. Do I listen openly

What came up for me when I stepped onto the 'path of accountability'?

What is the difference between guilt and shame in accountability?

How can I model healthy accountability for young people?

(20 min)

Interactive Activity: Reframing Accountability

This activity helps support you to redefine accountability as a path toward growth instead of a source of shame.

Instructions:

- Think of a time when someone held you accountable (or should have).
- Write down your initial emotional response.
  a. Did you feel defensive?
  b. Embarrassed?
  c. Angry?
  d. Guilty?
- Now, rewrite the experience through a growth-based accountability lens:
  a. Instead of, “I messed up, and now I feel terrible,”
  b. Reframe it as, “I made a mistake, but I have the power to make it right.”
- Reflect on how accountability has helped you grow.

Reflection Questions After the Activity:

- How does reframing accountability change my emotional response?
- How can I hold myself accountable without self-judgment?
- How can I hold others accountable with compassion rather than criticism?

Module 5:
Managing Triggers.

(20 min)

Reflective Journaling & Self-Inquiry

Continuing on from the visualisation, take 20 minutes to journal your thoughts. There are no right or wrong answers, this is your personal reflection space to engage with the prompts as deeply as you are able.

Journal Prompts:

What does it feel like in my body when I am triggered?

a. Does my heart race?
b. Do I tense up?
c. Do I shut down?

What types of situations or words trigger me the most?

a. Where do these reactions come from?
b. What past experiences shaped them?

How do I typically respond when I feel triggered?

a. Do I react immediately?
b. Do I withdraw?
c. Do I overcompensate?

What would it look like to pause and choose my response instead of reacting impulsively?

(20 min)

Interactive Activity: Creating a Personal Trigger Plan

This activity helps you develop a conscious strategy for handling triggers before they escalate and we react in ways that aren't in line with who we want to be and how we want to show up.

Instructions:

Identify 1-3 triggers in your work or even your personal life that you feel comfortable to explore. The following list of examples covers a wide range of potential emotional triggers that may arise in both professional and personal contexts. Triggers are deeply personal and often stem from past experiences, unmet needs, or ingrained beliefs. Recognising them is the first step toward responding rather than reacting. Use some from this list or create a list of your own.

Triggers Related to Respect & Boundaries:

- Being interrupted while speaking (feeling unheard or disrespected).
- Someone ignoring or dismissing your opinion (feeling unvalued).
- Being expected to work beyond your limits (difficulty saying no, fear of letting people down).
- Not having your boundaries respected (feeling a lack of control over your time and energy).
- Colleagues or young people challenging authority in a disrespectful way (feeling undermined).

Triggers Related to Communication & Conflict:

- Being criticised especially in front of others (feeling embarrassed or inadequate).
- Having someone raise their voice at you (feeling unsafe, activating past experiences of aggression).
- Feeling like you're not being listened to or taken seriously (frustration at being over looked).
- Dealing with passive-aggressive behaviour (confusion or frustration due to lack of directness).
- Being confronted unexpectedly (feeling caught off guard or unprepared).
- Receiving vague or unclear feedback (feeling anxious about expectations).

Triggers Related to Authority & Power Dynamics:

- Being questioned or second-guessed in your role (feeling like you need to prove yourself).
- Feeling micromanaged or controlled (fear of losing autonomy).
- Seeing favouritism in a professional setting (feeling unfairly treated or undervalued).
- Feeling powerless in decision-making (frustration from a past lack of control).
- Young people challenging authority aggressively (bringing up feelings of being disrespected or helpless).

Triggers Related to Overwhelm & Emotional Load:

- Being expected to be emotionally available all the time (burnout, exhaustion).
- Feeling responsible for fixing others' problems (deep need to be useful or avoid failure).
- Witnessing trauma or distress in young people (triggering personal pain or helplessness).
- Juggling too many responsibilities without enough support (feeling unseen or taken advantage of).
- Noticing a lack of appreciation for your efforts (feeling undervalued or unseen).

Triggers Related to Personal Trauma & Past Experiences:

- Someone using a dismissive tone that reminds you of a past harmful relationship (unresolved emotional wounds).
- Being spoken to in a way that mirrors past bullying or manipulation (feeling vulnerable or unsafe).
- Hearing triggering language about gender, race, or identity (feeling unseen or devalued).
- Being around someone who reminds you of a past abuser or authority figure (subconscious emotional responses).
- Engaging in discussions about topics that directly relate to your past traumas (feeling emotionally flooded).

Triggers Related to Injustice & Inequality:

- Hearing sexist, racist, or homophobic remarks (frustration, anger, helplessness).
- Seeing young people treated unfairly based on their background (deep sense of injustice).
- Being in an environment where harm or abuse is ignored or downplayed (moral distress).
- Hearing people defend harmful behaviours or systems (feeling invalidated).

Triggers Related to Control & Uncertainty:

- Not knowing what's expected of you in a situation (anxiety, fear of failure).
- Feeling forced into situations without choice (loss of autonomy).
- Last-minute schedule changes or unclear instructions (feeling destabilised).
- Unpredictable behaviour from young people or colleagues (uncertainty or past experiences of chaos).
- Being asked to do something outside your ethical comfort zone (internal moral conflict).

Triggers Related to Failure & Self-Worth:

- Making a mistake and being called out on it (shame or fear of incompetence).
- Not meeting your own high expectations (perfectionism).
- Comparing yourself to others who seem more successful (self-doubt, imposter syndrome).
- Feeling like you're not making an impact (fear of inadequacy).
- Getting negative feedback, even when constructive (difficulty separating feedback from personal worth).

How to Use The List:

- Once you have identified which triggers resonate the most with you, write down a specific situation where you've felt these triggers arise. Where were you? What was happening?
- Reflect on where they may stem from; past experiences, values, insecurities?
- Brainstorm how you can pause, process, and choose a healthier response.
- Consider how you typically react to these triggers; do you shut down, get defensive,or overcompensate? Do you get loud or get quiet? Do you have the awareness,language and consciousness to articulate what is happening for you?
- Describe how these triggers affect you physically, emotionally, and mentally.
- Develop a personal pause strategy for each trigger that works for you. E.g: deep breathing, stepping away, using a grounding technique.
- Write a new response you'd like to practice when you notice yourself being triggered. This awareness will empower you to respond to triggers with intention, rather than being controlled by them.

Reflection Questions After the Activity:

- How would my professional and personal relationships change if I could respond rather than react?
- What would it feel like to have more control over my emotions instead of being controlled by them?
- What's one self-regulation tool that I can commit to practicing?

Module 6:
Holding Boundaries.

(20 min)

Reflective Journaling & Self-Inquiry

Continuing on from the visualisation, take 20 minutes to journal your thoughts. There are no right or wrong answers, this is your personal reflection space to engage with the prompts as deeply as you are able.

Journal Prompts:

Reflect on a time when you felt your boundaries were violated.

a. How did it make you feel?
b. What signs indicated that your boundary was crossed?

Consider a situation where you successfully set a boundary.

a. What steps did you take?
b. How did others respond?
c. How did upholding this boundary benefit you?

Identify areas in your life where boundaries are currently weak or nonexistent.

a. What fears or beliefs prevent you from setting boundaries in these areas?

Envision the positive outcomes of establishing stronger boundaries.

a. How would your personal and professional life improve?
b. How might this impact your relationships with young people you work with? benefit you?

(15 min)

Interactive Activity: Boundary Setting Role-Play

This activity provides an opportunity to practice setting and communicating boundaries in a safe environment with yourself.

Instructions:

- Use a mirror or record yourself. Observe your tone, your body language and be mindful of your breathing.
- Write down a scenario relevant to your work or personal life where a boundary is needed. For example — a colleague asking for extra help when you're already overwhelmed.
- Role-play the conversation, focusing on:
  a. Clearly stating your boundary. Eg: "I appreciate that you trust me to help,but I need to be honest—I'm at full capacity right now and can't take on any extra work."
  b. Using "I" statements to express your feelings and needs. Eg: "I'm feeling really stretched with my current workload, and I need to make sure I can meet my existing commitments before taking on anything new. I don't want to over promise and then not deliver."
  c. Maintaining a calm and assertive tone. Keep your tone steady, neutral, and kind; acknowledge their request without feeling the need to over-explain or justify too much.
  d. Anticipating and managing potential reactions from the other person. Practice responding to as many different scenarios as you can think of. Eg: If they push back and say, "It won't take long, I really need your help." then you can respond calmly: "I understand that this is important to you, and I'd love to help if I could, but I simply don't have the capacity right now. If it's urgent,perhaps we can find someone else who might be available?"

Reflection Questions After the Activity:

- How did it feel to articulate your boundary?
- What challenges (if any) arise for you during the role-play?
- How did the other person's reaction (imagined) affect your response?
- What strategies helped you maintain your boundary without feeling guilty or aggressive?

Module 7:
Assertive Conversations.

(20 min)

Reflective Journaling & Self-Inquiry

Continuing on from the visualisation, take 20 minutes to journal your thoughts. There are no right or wrong answers, this is your personal reflection space to engage with the prompts as deeply as you are able.

Journal Prompts:

Reflect on a recent conversation where you felt unheard or where your needs were unmet.

a. How did you express yourself?
b. What was the outcome?

Identify any fears or beliefs that hinder you from speaking assertively.

a. Are you concerned about conflict or rejection?
b. How do these fears impact your communication?

Envision a scenario where you successfully balance assertiveness and empathy.

a. What does this look like for you?
b. How do you think this is received by them?

(20 min)

Interactive Activity: Role-Playing Assertive and Empathetic Conversations

This activity provides an opportunity to practice combining assertiveness with empathy in a safe environment with yourself.

Instructions:

- Use a mirror or record yourself. Alternatively, if you have a colleague you want to practice with, this could also work.
- Choose one challenging scenario currently relevant to your work or personal life, for example: addressing a colleague who interrupts you frequently.
- Role-play the conversation, focusing on:
  a. Clearly stating your perspective using I statements. Eg: “I’ve noticed that when I’m speaking in meetings, I sometimes get interrupted before I can finish my point. I feel frustrated when this happens because I want to contribute fully to the discussion.”
  b. Acknowledging the other person’s feelings and viewpoint. Eg: “I understand that you’re passionate about sharing ideas, and I really value your input. I also know that in fast-paced conversations, it can be easy to jump in without realising it.”
  c. Maintaining a calm and respectful tone. After recording the conversation,listen to it with your eyes closed. Reflect: How would you find someone talking to you in this exact tone? Is there anything you want to change?
  d. Seeking a mutually beneficial resolution. Eg: “Would you be open to us bothmaking a conscious effort to let each other finish speaking before res ponding? That way, we can ensure everyone’s ideas are fully heard.”

This approach expresses your needs clearly, validates the other person’s perspective, and suggests a solution that could benefit both parties. When we can communicate assertively we have no need to be angry or resentful. We are able to clearly express our needs in a way that invites positive dialogue. Understanding different communication styles helps us navigate conversations effectively and foster healthier relationships.

Module 8: Inviting Meaningful Conversations on Gender Equality.

(20 min)

Reflective Journaling & Self-Inquiry

Continuing on from the visualisation, take 20 minutes to journal your thoughts. There are no right or wrong answers, this is your personal reflection space to engage with the prompts as deeply as you are able.

Journal Prompts:

How do I personally feel when conversations about gender equality or harmful attitudes displayed, arise? Do I feel confident, hesitant, frustrated, hopeful?

When have I experienced resistance in conversations about gender or power?

a. How did I respond?
b. What could I have done differently? or withheld?

What are common reasons people resist discussing gender equality?

How can I respond to resistance in a way that encourages reflection rather than defensiveness?

What's one way I can create a safe space for others to explore their perspectives on gender?

(20 min)

Interactive Activity: Reframing Conversations

This activity helps participants reframe conversations on gender equality in a way that encourages dialogue rather than defensive debate.

Instructions:

- Write down a list of common resistance statements you've heard about gender equality. Eg: Men and women already have equal rights.
- Rewrite it into a reflective question that invites curiosity rather than defensiveness. Instead of: 'That's not true—there's still gender inequality everywhere' try 'That's an interesting perspective, what do you think equality looks like in daily life?'
- Ask a reflective question for every statement on your list. Practice responding with openness and curiosity, rather than frustration or correction.
- Reflect on how this could shift your approach and impact your work with young people.

Reflection Questions After the Activity:

- How does asking questions instead of arguing change the tone of a conversation?
- What are some open-ended questions that could spark genuine reflection?
- How can I create a space where people feel safe enough to reconsider their perspectives?

Congratulations on completing the Create the Conditions course!

Over the past eight modules, you have explored self-awareness, trauma-informed practice, boundaries, accountability, communication, and the art of creating safe spaces for meaningful conversations. You have taken the time to reflect on your own experiences, challenge your beliefs, and develop practical skills that will help you support young people in a way that is both authentic and impactful.

This course was never just about theory; it was about real, personal growth. You have gone down the path of courageous inner work, faced difficult truths, and strengthened your ability to show up as a role model and guide in the lives of young people. By engaging in this process, you have embodied the very lessons you will pass on, because role modelling is always a powerful way of teaching what it is actually like to learn and apply these concepts in real time.

Your work does not end here. Every conversation you have, every boundary you set, every space you create, and every moment you choose empathy over judgment will contribute to a culture of safety, respect, and equality. The impact of your learning will ripple far beyond this course, into the hearts and minds of the young people who look up to you, and into the communities that will grow stronger because of your leadership.

As you move forward, remember:

1. Self-awareness is a lifelong journey so keep checking in with yourself!
2. Boundaries protect your energy, honour them so you can continue this work sustainably.
3. Accountability and empathy go hand in hand and change happens when we hold space for both.
4. Difficult conversations are invitations, not battles so please approach them with curiosity and not defensiveness.
5. You are making a difference! Every safe space you create is a step toward a more just and equal world.

Thank you for showing up—not just for this course, but for yourself, for the young people you work with, and for the future you are helping to shape. The work you do is vital, and your commitment to it does not go unnoticed. Go forward and create the conditions for meaningful change for you are the change-makers. Every conversation you have, every safe space you create, and every harmful attitude you challenge helps shape a future where respect, equality, and safety are the norm. The Well-beir of Future Generations (Wales) Act reminds us that the work we do today shapes the world for tomorrow, a world that is fairer, more inclusive, and free from violence. Keep listening, keep learning, and keep leading. The young people you support are watching, and your impact will last longer than you know. Let’s continue build a future where everyone can thrive!

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The next chapter begins with you!