

WRITTEN GROUP PROTOCOL

1. **Title of the group:** Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree

2. **Group goals/Skills addressed**

The purpose of this group is to increase the group members' awareness of crafting and how it can be used as an everyday hobby or leisure activity. In this group, crafting uses many skills, such as sequencing, initiation of a task, fine motor control, and attention to task. By the end of this group, members will have created a picture of a Christmas tree from another country while working with a partner. Members will understand the importance and significance of crafting as a hobby or leisure activity. Finally, group members will create a Christmas tree felt pin by following instructions given to them and using materials given to them.

3. **Rationale for group topic**

Crafts mediate meaningfulness in people's lives. It can increase health and well-being, as well as individual development. Crafting can be considered both a hobby/leisure activity and/or a work occupation. Crafting can simulate skills and occupations that one uses in their everyday life. Some who have a mental health diagnosis do not have the opportunity to work, creating loneliness and meaningfulness. Crafting, especially with others, can increase socialization and networking. Research has shown that crafting with those who have a mental health diagnosis can facilitate stability and routines, skills and abilities, and peer support.

Horghagen, S., Fostvedt, B., & Alsaker, S. (2014). Craft activities in groups at meeting places: supporting mental health users' everyday occupations. *Scandinavian Journal Of Occupational Therapy*, 21(2), 145-152. doi:10.3109/11038128.2013.866691

4. **Description**

- Introduction/warm-up (10-15 minutes)
 - i. State and explain group rules
 - 1. Put away all electronics
 - 2. No eating
 - 3. Everything said in group should not be talked about outside of group
 - 4. No sleeping
 - 5. No talking over others or having side conversations
 - ii. Explain the purpose of the group

Verbal Introduction: "Good morning everyone. Today our group is on crafting and using it as a leisure activity or hobby. Today, we are going to learn about different Christmas trees around the world by working together as partners to draw pictures. Then, we are going to create a Christmas tree pin."
 - iii. Warm-Up Activity: "Christmas Trees Around the World"

Verbal Instruction: "I want everyone to get together with a partner. I have a bunch of slips of paper explaining different Christmas trees found around the world. I want each pair to take one sheet of paper. After reading the slip of paper, I want you to come together and draw what you think that Christmas tree might look like. Some slips of paper have a Christmas scene rather than just a tree; draw that as well. After everyone is finished, I will have each pair read their slip of paper and then show their picture to the group."

 - Group leader will have materials on table
 - Slips of paper will be cut out and put in a container

- Each pair will take a slip of paper and draw what they think it would look like
 - Each pair will be asked to share their picture after everyone is finished
- Sharing knowledge (5 minutes)
 - i. Group leader will ask group members why they think it is important to craft in their free time.
 1. Crafting can come in many ways, but it is a great way to work on skills needed for work or school.
 2. Some people who do not have the opportunity to work can feel lonely or meaningless at times. Crafting, especially with a group of people, can increase socialization and networking.
 3. Crafting can facilitate stability and routines.
 4. You could even craft and give your final product to others as a gift.
 - ii. Group leader will ask members what skills they think crafting works on.
 1. Attending to a task, fine motor control (strengthening your hands and fingers), following instructions, using materials correctly, and keeping your mind occupied.
 - iii. Group leader will ask members to share different crafts that they have enjoyed making in the past.
 1. I have made creative memory books, painted canvases, made homemade ornaments, painted coolers, and made bracelets.
 - iv. Group leader will bring up crafting in your free time versus crafting to make money.
 1. Some that really enjoy crafting decide to make it their job.
 2. What are some different jobs you can think of that involves crafting?
- Activity (20-25 minutes): “Christmas Tree Pin”

Verbal Instruction: “We are now going to move onto our main activity. We are going to create a felt Christmas tree pin as our craft today. Follow the steps on your sheet in order to make your pin. All of the materials are here on the table. Please ask for help if you need it!”

 1. Have instruction sheets printed out for each member to follow.
 2. Have materials on table for members to use.
- Processing/Reflection (5 minutes)
 - i. What are you going to do with your tree pin?
 1. I am going to give mine as a Christmas gift.
 - ii. Is crafting something that you think you might do in the future?
 - iii. If you enjoy crafting a lot, do you think one day you may want to make it a job where you make money off of it?
 - iv. What was the hardest part of making the tree pin?
 - v. What skills that we talked about earlier do think that this activity worked on?
 - vi. Do you enjoy crafting with a group of people or crafting alone more? Why?
- Closure (5 minutes)

Verbal Instruction: “Crafting can be used in our everyday lives as a leisure activity, hobby, or even as a form of work. Crafting uses on many skills that can simulate skills we use while working or while studying in school. Crafting can be done alone or with a group of people. When crafting with a group of people, it can increase our socialization with others, making us feel less lonely and with more peer support. Does anyone have any questions? Does anyone have any suggestions or feedback for me?”

 - i. Have members help clean up materials

5. Session format

- Preparation (5 minutes before group begins)
 - Lay out materials
 - Introduction (10-15 minutes)
 - Explain rationale and group norms
 - Warm-up activity: “Christmas Trees Around the World”
 - Sharing knowledge (5 minutes)
 - Activity (20-25 minutes)
 - “Christmas Tree Pin”
 - Processing/Reflection (5 minutes)
 - Discussing information/answering discussion questions
 - Closure (5 minutes)
 - Summarizing the main information from the group
 - Asking questions and giving/receiving feedback
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6. Environment

This group will take place in the upstairs dining area for the warm-up activity and the kitchen area for the main activity at Park Center. Everyone will be seated in chairs around the kitchen table during the group. All lights will be on for this group in order to see materials.

7. Safety precautions

Caution should be taken when members are using needles to embroider the felt tree and scissors to cut out felt.

8. Leader's role

During this group, my role will be a facilitative group leader. I will be there to facilitate the warm-up activity and the main activity, assisting when needed. Members will be encouraged to share throughout the activities.

9. Materials needed

- Paper
 - Markers, crayons, colored pencils
 - Sheets of paper with information about Christmas trees around the world
 - Wool blend felt
 - Embroidery floss
 - Small safety pins
 - Craft glue
 - Sewing needles
 - Scissors
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10. Special strategies

- Grading

- i. Grade up: Do not give members instructions on paper and instead read instructions out loud. This would increase active listening skills and abstract thinking.
 - ii. Grade down: Already have felt pieces cut out for members. This would decrease sequencing skills, problem solving, and decision-making.
 - iii. Grade down: Instead of having them stitch the tree's face and decorations on, you could have them use puffy glue to add decorations. This would decrease fine motor control, problem solving, and decision-making.
- Adaptations
 - i. Some group members may require assistance with stitching and I will be there to assist them step by step if they need help.
 - ii. If more time is needed to create the Christmas pin, I will allow them more time to finish after group is over if we are running close on time.
 - iii. If there is an uneven amount of members, I will be one of the members partners in creating the Christmas tree picture.
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Christmas Trees Around the World

Greenland

Christmas trees are imported, as no trees live this far north. They are decorated with candles and bright ornaments.

Ireland

Christmas trees are bought anytime in December and decorated with colored lights, tinsel, and ornaments. The house is decorated with garlands, candles, holly, and ivy. Wreaths and mistletoe are hung on the door.

Sweden

Most people buy Christmas trees well before Christmas Eve, but it's not common to take the tree inside and decorate it until just a few days before. Evergreen trees are decorated with stars, sunbursts, and snowflakes made from straw. Other decorations include colorful wooden animals and straw centerpieces.

Norway

When Christmas Eve arrives, there is the decorating of the tree, usually done by the parents behind the closed doors of the living room, while the children wait with excitement outside. A Norwegian ritual known as "circling the Christmas tree" follows, where everyone joins hands to form a ring around the tree and then walk around it singing carols. Afterwards, gifts are distributed.

Germany

Today, the Tannenbaum (Christmas tree) is traditionally decorated in secret with lights, tinsel, and ornaments by the mother and is lit and revealed on Christmas Eve with cookies, nuts, and gifts under its branches.

China

Of the small percentage of Chinese who do celebrate Christmas, most erect artificial trees decorated with spangles and paper chains, flowers, and lanterns. Christmas trees are called "trees of light."

Japan

For most of the Japanese who celebrate Christmas, it's purely a secular holiday devoted to the love of their children. Christmas trees are decorated with small toys, dolls, paper ornaments, gold paper fans and lanterns, and wind chimes. Miniature candles are also put among the tree branches. One of the most popular ornaments is the origami swan. Japanese children have exchanged thousands of folded paper "birds of peace" with young people all over the world as a pledge that war must not happen again.

Ukraine

In Ukraine, Christmas Trees are often decorated with artificial spider's webs! The story of The Christmas Spider is very popular in Ukraine and finding a spider on web on your tree is meant be good luck.

There are also little spider's web decorations, made of paper and silver wire, called 'pavuchky' (which means 'little spider') which people hang on their trees.

Christmas Tree Trivia (In case we have extra time at the end)

Christmas trees have been sold commercially in the United States since about 1850.

In 1979, the National Christmas Tree was not lighted except for the top ornament. This was done in honor of the American hostages in Iran.

Between 1887-1933 a fishing schooner called the Christmas Ship would tie up at the Clark Street bridge and sell spruce trees from Michigan to Chicagoans.

The tallest living Christmas tree is believed to be the 122-foot, 91-year-old Douglas fir in the town of Woodinville, Washington.

The Rockefeller Center Christmas tree tradition began in 1933. Franklin Pierce, the 14th president, brought the Christmas tree tradition to the White House.

In 1923, President Calvin Coolidge started the National Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony now held every year on the White House lawn.

Since 1966, the National Christmas Tree Association has given a Christmas tree to the President and first family.

Most Christmas trees are cut weeks before they get to a retail outlet.

In 1912, the first community Christmas tree in the United States was erected in New York City.

Christmas trees generally take 6-8 years to mature.

Christmas trees are grown in all 50 states including Hawaii and Alaska.

100,000 people are employed in the Christmas tree industry.

98 percent of all Christmas trees are grown on farms.

More than 1,000,000 acres of land have been planted with Christmas trees.

77 million Christmas trees are planted each year.

On average, over 2,000 Christmas trees are planted per acre.

You should never burn your Christmas tree in the fireplace. It can contribute to creosote buildup.

Other types of trees such as cherry and hawthorns were used as Christmas trees in the past.

Thomas Edison's assistants came up with the idea of electric lights for Christmas trees.

In 1963, the National Christmas Tree was not lit until December 22nd because of a national 30-day period of mourning following the assassination of President Kennedy.

Teddy Roosevelt banned the Christmas tree from the White House for environmental reasons.

In the first week, a tree in your home will consume as much as a quart of water per day.

Tinsel was once banned by the government. Tinsel contained lead at one time, now it's made of plastic.

In 1984, the National Christmas Tree was lit on December 13th with temperatures in the 70s, making it one of the warmest tree lightings in history.

34 to 36 million Christmas trees are produced each year and 95 percent are shipped or sold directly from Christmas tree farms.

California, Oregon, Michigan, Washington, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina are the top Christmas tree producing states.

The best selling trees are Scotch Pine, Douglas Fir, Fraser Fir, Balsam Fir, and White Pine.