



Vision Board Event Facilitator Guide for Suicide Prevention Month

Purpose: This guide is designed to help facilitators plan and execute a Vision Board event during Suicide Prevention Month. The goal of this event is to provide a safe and supportive space for Coast Guard members to create personal vision boards that promote mental health, resilience and positive future.

Event Overview

Event Name: Vision Board Workshop: Visualizing the

Target Audience: Coast Guard members (active-duty, reserve, veterans, and family members)

Duration: 1.5 - 2 hours

Objective: To foster hope, positive thinking, and self-reflection among participants by creating vision boards that reflect their personal goals, dreams and sources of joy. This creative activity aims to enhance mental well-being, build resilience, and promote a sense of community and support.

Preparation Steps

1. **Select a Venue:** Choose a comfortable and quiet space that can accommodate the number of participants, such as a community center, conference room, or outdoor area. Ensure there are enough tables and chairs for participants to work on their boards.
2. **Gather Materials:**
 - Poster boards or large sheets of paper
 - Magazines, newspapers, and printouts with positive images and quotes
 - Scissors, glue sticks, tape, and markers
 - Stickers, colored paper, and other decorative items
 - Optional: digital devices or tablets for creating digital vision boards
3. **Create a Safe Environment:**
 - Ensure the space is welcoming and inclusive.
 - Have mental health professionals or peer support members available in case any participant feels overwhelmed or triggered.
 - Provide light refreshments and a relaxing ambiance (e.g., calming music, comfortable seating).
4. **Promotional Materials:**
 - Create flyers, emails, and social media posts to promote the event.
 - Highlight the benefits of creating a vision board for mental health, goal setting, and resilience-building.



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5. Set Up the Space:

- Arrange tables and chairs for group or individual workstations.
- Display sample vision boards for inspiration.
- Prepare a small area for mental health resources, including brochures, crisis hotline numbers, and contact information for on-site mental health professionals.



Event Agenda

1. **Welcome and Introduction (10 minutes)**
 - Greet participants as they arrive and provide a brief overview of the event.
 - Share the purpose of the workshop and how creating a vision board can help with mental well-being by focusing on positivity, hope, and personal growth.
 - Introduce any mental health professionals or peer support members available for support during the event.
2. **Icebreaker Activity (10 minutes)**
 - Facilitate a simple icebreaker to help participants feel comfortable. For example, ask each participant to share one positive thing that happened to them recently or a goal they have for the coming month.
3. **Presentation: Importance of Vision Boards for Mental Health (10 minutes)**
 - Provide a brief presentation on how vision boards can help shift focus from negative thoughts to positive ones, helping to set goals and foster resilience.
 - Discuss the connection between visualization, positive thinking, and mental health. Encourage participants to think about what inspires them and brings them joy.
4. **Vision Board Creation (60 minutes)**
 - Allow participants to start creating their vision boards. Encourage them to think about their personal goals, what makes them happy, and what they are working towards.
 - Offer prompts to guide them, such as:
 - What are three things that make you feel fulfilled?
 - What goals or dreams are you working towards?
 - What images or words inspire hope and positivity in you?
 - Circulate among the participants, offering encouragement and support as needed. Check in with anyone who may appear to be struggling.
5. **Reflection and Sharing (20 minutes)**
 - Invite participants to share their vision boards with the group, if they feel comfortable. Encourage them to explain why they chose specific images or quotes and what they hope to achieve.
 - Facilitate a discussion on how participants can use their vision boards in daily life to stay motivated, focused, and positive.
6. **Closing and Resources (10 minutes)**
 - Thank participants for attending and sharing their creativity and experiences.
 - Remind everyone of the mental health resources available and encourage them to reach out if they need support.
 - Distribute a flyer or handout with helpful resources, such as crisis hotline numbers, contact information for on-base counselors, and links to mental health services.
7. **Optional: Follow-Up Activities**
 - Encourage participants to take photos of their vision boards and share them on a community board or closed social media group for continued support.



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- Consider setting up a follow-up session to discuss progress, challenges, and continued support in achieving the goals represented on their vision boards.

Facilitator Tips

- **Create a Non-Judgmental Space:** Encourage open sharing and respect for diverse perspectives. Reinforce that this is a supportive environment where everyone is free to express themselves.
- **Be Attuned to Participants' Needs:** Be aware of participants who may become emotional or seem withdrawn. Approach them gently, offer support, and ensure they are aware of available resources.
- **Encourage Creativity:** Remind participants there is no right or wrong way to create a vision board. Encourage them to express themselves authentically.
- **Stay Positive and Uplifting:** Keep the atmosphere light, positive, and encouraging. Highlight the benefits of visualizing a hopeful and fulfilling future.

Key Takeaways

- Vision boards are a creative tool for promoting positive thinking and goal-setting, which can be particularly beneficial for mental health.
- This event fosters a sense of community and support among Coast Guard members, reinforcing that they are not alone in their struggles.
- By focusing on hope, resilience, and future aspirations, participants can take proactive steps toward maintaining their mental health and well-being.

Remember:

The Vision Board Workshop is more than just a creative activity; it's an opportunity to inspire hope, build resilience and strengthen our community's support for each other. Together, we can work towards a brighter future.

For more information or to schedule additional mental health workshops, contact the CG-1K1 and the Suicide Prevention Program Office.



Vision Board Event Participant Guide

What is a Vision Board?

A vision board is a self-assembled collection of images, quotes, affirmations, and other ideas that offer non-invasive reminders of actions, memories, friends, and family that bring calming thoughts. It can foster hope, connections and resilience and supports self-care. Vision boards can take many forms including physical like a poster or digital that can be a wallpaper on your phone or computer.

Creating a board is a proactive self-care step in maintaining your mental well-being. It's a visual reminder of the good in your life and the strength you have to keep going, even when times are tough. They serve as a reminder of the things you cherish, the dreams you're working toward, and the strength you have to overcome challenges. Often when you're feeling challenged or in the middle of a situation, it can be difficult to manifest positive thoughts, and vision boards can be a constant reminder of the positive things in your life. Your life and well-being are invaluable.

Steps to Create Your Vision Board:

1. Reflect on Your Life and Goals

- Take some time to think about the positive aspects of your life. This could include family, friends, hobbies, achievements, and future aspirations.
- Consider what brings you joy, what you're proud of, and what you're working toward. Think about the things that make life worth living and that you want to remind yourself of in difficult times.
- Think about environments, places, times or events that make you happy and that you look forward to with anticipation.

2. Gather Materials

- **Board:** You can use a corkboard, poster board, or even a digital platform like a tablet or computer.
- **Images:** Collect pictures from magazines, printouts, or online sources that represent your goals, happiness, and strength.
- **Quotes:** Find or write down motivational quotes, affirmations, or words that inspire you.
- **Personal Items:** Include photos of loved ones, mementos, or symbols that have personal significance.

3. Organize Your Vision Board

- Start placing the images, quotes, and items on your board in a way that feels right to you. There's no "wrong" way to do this—it's all about what resonates with you.
- Consider grouping items by theme (e.g., family, career goals, personal growth) or arranging them in a way that tells a story or creates a visual flow.

4. Add Positive Affirmations

- Write down or include positive affirmations that reinforce your strengths and goals. Examples might be:
 - "I am strong enough to overcome any challenge."
 - "I am surrounded by love and support."
 - "Every day, I am moving closer to my goals."



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5. Place Your Vision Board Where You'll See It Often

- Hang or place your vision board somewhere you will see it daily—by your bed, at your desk, or in a locker. This ensures that you're regularly reminded of your positive vision.
- You can also place a daily vision board reminder on your phone or digital device to provide a regular reminder to view your board.

6. Use Your Vision Board as a Coping Tool

- When you're feeling down or overwhelmed, take a moment to focus on your vision board. Let it remind you of the good in your life, your reasons for persevering, and the goals you're striving for.
- Use it to refocus your thoughts and energies during challenging times.

7. Update Your Vision Board Regularly

- Your vision board should evolve as your life and goals do. Update it periodically to reflect new achievements, goals, or sources of inspiration.
- Remove anything that no longer serves you and replace it with something that does.

Tips for Success:

- **Personalize It:** This board is for you, so make sure it reflects who you are and what's important to you.
- **Stay Positive:** Focus on the positive aspects of life and goals. Avoid including anything that brings negative feelings.
- **Share with Trusted Friends or Counselors:** If comfortable, share your vision board with a trusted friend, mentor, or counselor to discuss your goals and feelings.

The Coast Guard Employee Assistance Program (EAP), CG SUPRT, is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to confidentially assist active-duty members, reservists, civilian employees, and their dependent family members with a full range of resilience topics including:

- marital and family problems
- alcohol and/or drug abuse
- depression and anxiety
- work-related concerns
- career transition issues
- personal growth and development
- legal and financial challenges
- balancing work and life demands
- tobacco cessation
- health improvement.

Download the Coast Guard Work-Life APP or call toll free at 855-CGSUPRT (247-8778).

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Remembrance Board Event Participant Guide

Purpose: A remembrance board, also known as a memory board or “in-memory board”, is a collection of photos, images, and other items that are used to honor the life of a deceased person that can be used in multiple settings.

Creating an In Memoriam or Remembrance Board is a heartfelt way to honor someone who has passed away. It provides a tangible way to preserve their memory and can offer comfort and connection during times of grief. Whether displayed at a memorial service or kept as a personal keepsake, the board is a lasting tribute to the impact the person had on your life and the lives of others.

Steps to Create Your Remembrance Board:

1. Reflect on the Person’s Life

- Take some time to think about the person you are commemorating. Consider their personality, accomplishments, hobbies, passions, and the moments you shared together.
- Think about what made them unique and how you want to represent their life on the board.

2. Gather Materials

- **Board:** Choose a sturdy surface like a corkboard, poster board, or foam board. You can also create a digital board if you prefer.
- **Photos:** Collect photographs that capture special moments, milestones, or everyday life. These can be from different stages of their life, showcasing their journey.
- **Quotes and Messages:** Include meaningful quotes, sayings, or messages. These could be things the person often said, favorite quotes, or words that reflect their spirit.
- **Mementos:** Incorporate small items that remind you of the person, such as ticket stubs, letters, or small pieces of fabric from their favorite clothing.
- **Decorative Elements:** Gather items like ribbons, flowers, or symbols (such as a cross, heart, or star) that resonate with the person’s personality or beliefs.

3. Plan the Layout

- Before attaching anything, lay out the items on the board to decide on an arrangement. Consider grouping photos by time period or theme or creating a central focal point with the person’s portrait.
- Think about including spaces for others to add their own notes or memories, especially if the board will be displayed at a gathering.

4. Assemble the Board

- Start attaching your items to the board. Use glue, pins, or tape to secure photos and mementos. Be gentle with older or fragile items to avoid damage.
- Arrange items thoughtfully, ensuring that the board tells a story or evokes a particular feeling about the person’s life and legacy.
- Add any decorative elements last to frame the board or highlight specific sections.



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5. Add Personal Touches

- Write or type captions, stories, or descriptions to accompany the photos and mementos. These can explain the significance of certain items or share a cherished memory.
- Consider adding a central quote or message that sums up the person's impact on those around them, such as a line from their favorite song or a saying that encapsulates their spirit.

6. Display the Remembrance Board

- Choose a meaningful place to display the board. This could be at a memorial service, in a family home, or another location where people can gather to reflect and remember.
- Ensure the board is visible and accessible, allowing others to view it and possibly add their own memories or notes.

7. Use the Board for Ongoing Remembrance

- After the initial display, consider keeping the board in a place where you or others can visit it when they want to remember the person.
- You might also create a digital version to share with family and friends who couldn't attend in person.

Tips for Creating a Meaningful Board:

- **Be Selective:** While it might be tempting to include everything, focus on the most meaningful items that truly represent the person's life and your memories of them.
- **Involve Others:** If appropriate, invite family members and friends to contribute photos, quotes, or messages to the board. This makes the board a collective remembrance.
- **Keep it Personal:** The board should reflect the individuality of the person you're honoring, so don't be afraid to personalize it with unique items or styles that represent their life.

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