



GROUP VIBE

Collective Emotion

RESOURCE FOR
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INSTRUCTORS



We Create the Atmosphere Together

HAVE YOU EVER WALKED INTO A ROOM AND IMMEDIATELY SENSED HOW PEOPLE WERE FEELING?

Perhaps the space felt:

- energetic
- calm
- welcoming
- playful
- focused
- relaxed
- tense
- uncertain

Without anyone saying a word, you could feel the atmosphere.

This is what we call **group vibe**. The vibe of a group is the emotional tone that emerges when people come together.

It shows up through:

- smiles
- laughter
- encouragement
- attention
- body language
- enthusiasm
- playfulness
- quiet focus

Every person contributes. Even when we do not speak, our presence influences the atmosphere around us.

In movement settings, group vibe can shape:

- whether people feel comfortable participating
- whether they are willing to try something new
- whether they feel safe making mistakes
- whether they enjoy the experience
- whether they want to return



Everyone Has Something Meaningful to Contribute

Group vibe is not something created by one person. It is something we co-create. Some days we contribute energy. Other days we contribute calm. Some days we support others through encouragement. Other days we simply contribute our presence.

As one participant in our InterActive for Life research shared:

We don't play to win. We don't keep score. Half the time we're playing off the table just to keep the ball in motion. The laughter that comes with that is a great example of shared enjoyment.

For this participant, the joy came not from performance or competition but from the atmosphere that emerged when people were enjoying the experience together.

InterActive for Life Reflection

Group vibe is something we create together.

The question is not:

"What is the vibe?"

The question is:

"What am I contributing to the vibe?"

Challenge

The next time you participate in a movement activity, ask yourself:

"How do I want people to feel when they move with this group?"

And:

"What can I do to help create that feeling?"

Instructor Activities

TO INSPIRE GROUP VIBE

1

Define the Intended Vibe

Before the session begins, ask:

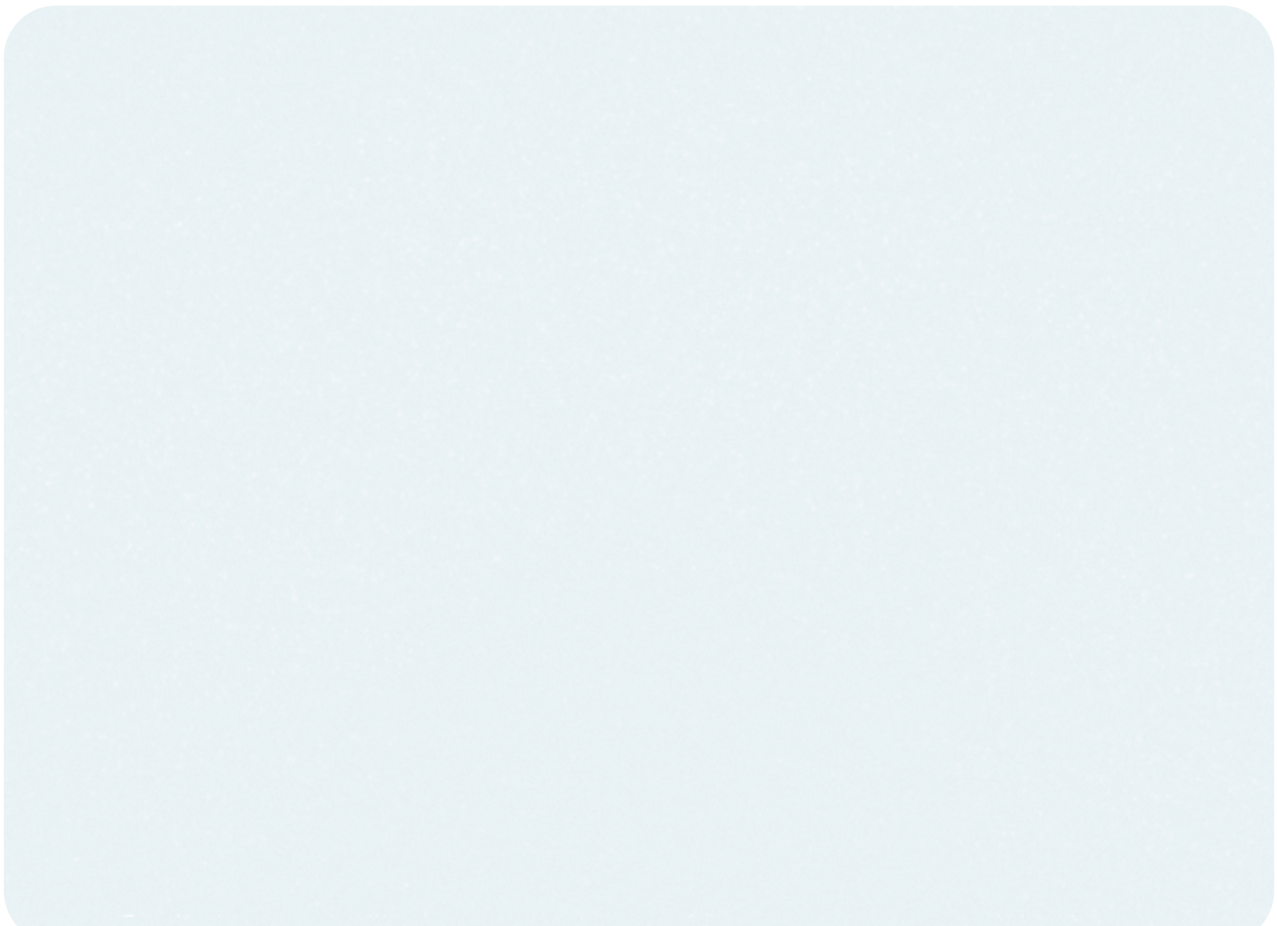
"How do I want participants to feel?"

Examples:

- playful
- energized
- focused
- connected
- calm
- joyful

Reflection

Do your activities support that emotional goal?



Instructor Activities

TO INSPIRE GROUP VIBE

2 Conduct a Vibe Audit

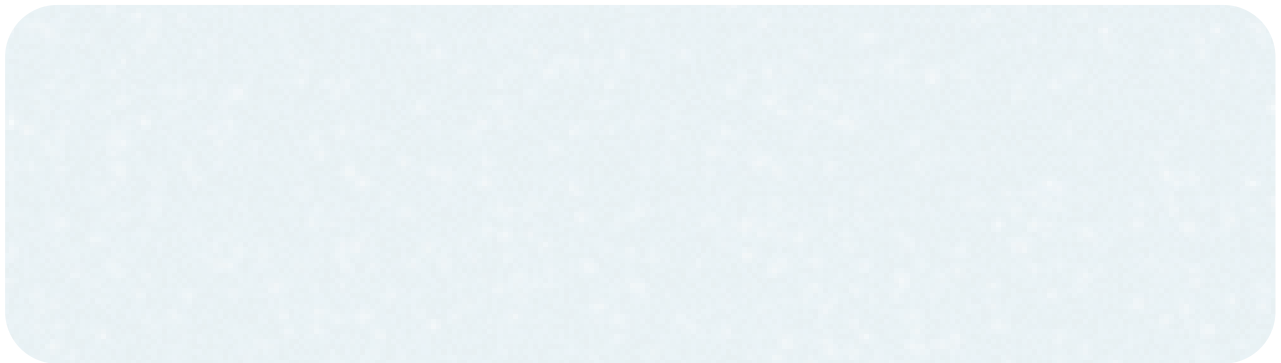
Observe the room.

Notice:

- facial expressions
- conversation levels
- body language
- energy levels
- engagement

Reflection

What atmosphere currently exists?



Is it the atmosphere you intended?



Instructor Activities

TO INSPIRE GROUP VIBE

3 Use Music and Environment Intentionally

The vibe is influenced by:

- music
- lighting
- room setup
- instructor tone
- pace of instruction

Challenge

Experiment with changing one environmental factor and observe what happens.



Instructor Activities

TO INSPIRE GROUP VIBE

4

Model the Mood

Participants look to leaders for cues.

Ask yourself:

- What energy am I bringing?
- What emotions am I expressing?
- How am I influencing the room?

Reflection

Are you teaching the vibe you wish to create?



Instructor Activities

TO INSPIRE GROUP VIBE

5 Create Shared Rituals

Group vibe grows stronger when people share experiences.

Examples:

- welcoming rituals
- opening circles
- group cheers
- appreciation moments
- celebrations

Challenge

Create one regular ritual that strengthens community.

6 Notice What You Praise

Do participants hear recognition only for:

- performance?
- effort?
- achievement?

Or do they also hear recognition for:

- creating positive energy?
- helping others enjoy themselves?
- contributing to the group atmosphere?
- encouraging others?

Inclusive Praise Examples

- ✓ "I appreciate the positive energy in this group."
- ✓ "Thank you for helping create a welcoming atmosphere."
- ✓ "I can see people supporting one another."
- ✓ "That laughter is contagious."
- ✓ "This group is creating something special together."
- ✓ "I appreciate how everyone is contributing."

Instructor Activities

TO INSPIRE GROUP VIBE

7

Use the Movement Mood Barometer

At the beginning of a session ask:

"How would we like to feel together today?"

At the end ask:

"Did we create that atmosphere?"

Examples:

- connected
- energized
- confident
- playful
- relaxed

Resource

Movement Mood Barometer:

<https://function2flow.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Movement-Mood-Barometer.pdf>

CLASS COLOUR CODE	ICON	E-MOTIONS
Red Aggressive		Quick/Aggressive/Competitive Activities that offer an outlet to release stress, feelings of aggression or frustration. <i>Examples: cardio boxing, pickleball, HITT training, cardio drumming</i>
Yellow Uplifting		Uplifting, Joyous, Ecstatic, Energizing, Invigorating Activities that offer opportunities to move joyfully to music with or without partner that promotes fun and laughter with options for freestyle flow or moving in unison. Class promotes feelings of success (graduated progressions). <i>Examples: freestyle dance, synchronized movement (i.e., clapping, tapping, cardio drumming/body percussion, belly dancing)</i>
Light Green Grounded		Predictable/Grounded Activities that follow consistent format designed to promote a mindful, rooted flow with repeated sequences. Attention is directed to breath, feeling body movement and feeling very present. <i>Examples: Mindful walking, Tai Chi, Yoga, range-of-motion exercises, meditation classes, mindfulness training</i>
Orange Cognitive Challenge		Cognitive Challenge-Dual Tasking Classes that complexify the experience that combine physical activity with cognitive challenges, i.e., counting, naming, problem-solving while engaged in movement. <i>Examples: "Simon(e) Says" games, Cross-Crawl</i>
Blue Restful		Slow/Peaceful/Relaxing Activities/ Classes that offer progressive relaxation, stretching/range of motion movements, mindful breathing. <i>Examples: Tai Chi, Yoga, Range-of-motion exercises, meditation classes. Mindfulness training</i>
Purple Spontaneous		Spontaneous/Creative Activities or games that offer variations in intensity, speed (quick bursts and holds), equipment/props (i.e., scarfs, beach balls, rubber chickens). <i>Examples: cooperative/modified games, i.e., chair volleyball, pool noodle games; partner dance; ping pong, scarf juggling</i>

Instructor Activities

TO INSPIRE GROUP VIBE

8 Celebrate Collective Success

At the end of the session ask:

"What helped make today's experience enjoyable?"

Often participants will mention:

- people
- atmosphere
- laughter
- encouragement
- connection

Reflection

What does this tell us about the importance of group vibe?



Instructor Tips

FOR GROUP VIBE

Tip #1: Atmosphere Comes Before Outcomes

People are more likely to engage when they feel emotionally safe.

Tip #2: Vibes Are Contagious

Energy, enthusiasm, calmness, and encouragement spread throughout groups.

Tip #3: Every Participant Contributes

Group vibe is not created solely by the instructor.

Tip #4: Inclusion Strengthens Atmosphere

People help create positive group emotions when they feel welcomed and valued.

Tip #5: Pay Attention to Emotional Outcomes

Participants often remember how an activity felt long after they forget what they did.



InterActive For Life

REMINDER

Every group develops an emotional atmosphere.

Every smile.

Every laugh.

Every encouragement.

Every welcoming gesture.

Every act of kindness.

These are movements that shape group vibe.

Key Takeaway

Group vibe is not something we enter.

It is something we create together.

When people contribute positive energy, support, humor, encouragement, and respect, movement becomes more enjoyable, meaningful, and memorable.

Congratulations!

You have explored ways to:

- ✓ Notice the atmosphere around you
- ✓ Contribute positive energy
- ✓ Support a welcoming environment
- ✓ Understand how emotions influence groups
- ✓ Strengthen connection through shared experiences
- ✓ Co-create meaningful movement environments

InterActive for Life Reminder

NOTICE. CONTRIBUTE. CONNECT.

Feel the atmosphere.

Help create it.

Support others.

Share the experience.

Build a vibe people want to return to.

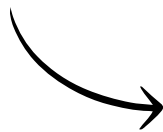
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Curious for more?

- [Quick tips for physical activity participants](#)
- [Complete the InterActive for Life Inventory](#)



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Prepared by: Catalina Belalcazar

