



SAILWISE TOOLKIT



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A NON-FORMAL EDUCATION TOOLKIT for Inclusive Women's Sailing Training

SAILING WOMEN'S INITIATIVE FOR SPORT AND EMPOWERMENT

Erasmus+ Sport · Project No. 101183943



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Sailing Women's Initiative for Sport and Empowerment (SAILWISE)

Erasmus+ Sport — Project No. 101183943

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Introduction

Women remain significantly underrepresented in sailing across Europe, and the reasons are rarely a matter of skill or interest. To understand these reasons directly rather than assume them, the SAILWISE project began with a transnational survey of 202 women across five partner countries, conducted between June and November 2025. The survey captured motivations, barriers, and learning preferences, and its findings shaped every stage of the work that followed.

The survey confirmed that women's motivation to sail is high, driven by adventure, connection with nature, wellbeing, and a sense of community. At the same time, it identified two distinct categories of barrier limiting participation. Structural barriers include cost, time, and geographic access to sailing facilities. Psychological and social barriers are equally significant, and in many respects more persistent: fear of taking on responsibility, low confidence in technical skills, and the experience of feeling underestimated in environments that remain predominantly male. Addressing only the structural barriers, without also addressing the psychological and social ones, was found to be insufficient on its own to change participation patterns.

This toolkit was developed as a direct response to that evidence. It brings together a curriculum of non-formal education activities, organised into six modules, each designed to address a specific dimension of the barriers identified — from establishing a psychologically safe learning environment, through coaching technique, to the practicalities of running a full sailing programme built around women's needs. Rather than being developed and published as a finished product, every activity in this toolkit was tested in two distinct stages: first during a five-day international training bringing together sailing coaches and instructors from across the partnership, and subsequently through local pilot events conducted independently by each partner with target-group participants in their own national context. The version of each session presented here reflects both rounds of testing and the refinements made as a result.

The toolkit is one part of a wider effort under the SAILWISE project, which also includes a train-the-trainer programme and a public awareness campaign, aimed collectively at building a more sustainable and inclusive sailing community across Europe.

Who This Toolkit Is For

This toolkit is intended primarily for sailing instructors and coaches. It is directly applicable to those working with beginner women sailors, those running mixed-gender groups, and those supporting women returning to the sport after an extended break. It is equally suited to instructors delivering short introductory or discovery sailing experiences and to those responsible for longer-term programmes within sailing schools or clubs.

The activities are also relevant to programme designers and club managers, particularly the sessions in Module 6, which move beyond individual coaching technique to address how a full women-centred programme is structured, staffed, and sustained over time.

No prior experience with non-formal education methods is required to use this toolkit. Each session has been written with sufficient detail and guidance that an instructor encountering this approach for the first time can deliver it directly, without additional training. This reflects the project's own needs assessment, which identified three distinct groups of women the curriculum needed to serve: women interested in sailing but not yet participating, beginner sailors, and those who had already completed a foundational skipper course. Each session specifies its own target group in more detail, allowing instructors planning a full programme to select and sequence sessions appropriate to the specific group in front of them.

About SAILWISE

SAILWISE (Sailing Women's Initiative for Sport and Empowerment) is an Erasmus+ Sport project, co-funded by the European Union (Project No. 101183943), delivered by a consortium of five partner organisations, coordinated by HORN Kraków:

Partner	Country	Focus
HORN Krakow	Poland	Project coordination; community sailing and education across generations
ACTIVE Austria	Austria	Inclusive sport, equality, and European cooperation
Active Zone Outdoor	Cyprus	Inclusion and outdoor education
4Sailing	Italy	Practical sailing education and instructor expertise
Why Knot Ladies	Slovakia	Women's confidence, leadership, and supportive crews

Following the initial needs-assessment survey, the consortium developed the toolkit's six-module curriculum and methodology, which were then tested during an international training held in Ancona, Italy, from 19 to 25 May 2026. Over five days combining land-based sessions with on-the-water sailing, fourteen participants representing the project's three target groups took part in a structured evaluation of each activity. Every tested session was assessed across four dimensions: how effectively it engaged participants, how clearly it was structured and instructed, how relevant it was to a genuine sailing context, and how feasible it was to deliver aboard an actual boat under real conditions. The results of this evaluation directly informed the version of each session presented in this toolkit.

Following the international training, each partner organisation conducted further local pilot events in their own country, testing the activities again with real target-group participants outside the controlled setting of the international training. Findings from these local pilots were incorporated into the toolkit alongside the results of the international training, so that each

activity reflects input from coaches and instructors as well as from the women the programme is ultimately designed to serve.

Erasmus+ is the European Union's programme for education, training, youth, and sport, running from 2021 to 2027. Within it, the Sport chapter supports grassroots sport and physical activity across Europe, with objectives that include increasing participation in sport, particularly among underrepresented groups; promoting social inclusion and equal opportunities; and encouraging cooperation between sport organisations across borders. SAILWISE is funded as a Cooperation Partnership under this chapter, a funding instrument designed to help sport organisations build transnational networks, develop and share good practices, and jointly address shared challenges in the sector. The project's focus on gender equality in sailing reflects these wider aims directly, and its outputs — including this toolkit — are intended to remain usable and freely available to sailing organisations across Europe beyond the project's own duration.

How to Use This Toolkit

The toolkit is organised into six modules, sequenced to progress from foundational psychological safety through to the practicalities of running a complete programme:

- **Module 1** – Safe & Empowering Learning Environment
- **Module 2** – Non-Formal Education Tools for Sailing
- **Module 3** – Inclusive Coaching Techniques
- **Module 4** – Practical Activity Toolbox
- **Module 5** – Environmental Awareness
- **Module 6** – Running Women-Centred Sailing Programs

While the modules are ordered deliberately, instructors are not required to use them sequentially or in full. Each session is designed to function as a standalone unit that can be selected according to the needs of a specific group, the time available, and the setting in which the session will be delivered.

Every session follows a consistent structure, and each element serves a distinct purpose. The opening paragraph states the session's purpose and its intended audience. Duration, location, and required materials specify what is practically needed to deliver the session as designed. Coaching notes draw attention to assumptions or biases instructors should be conscious of in their own practice, alongside concrete guidance for delivery. The step-by-step description forms the core of each session, and is written in sufficient detail to be delivered without further preparation or interpretation. Variations offer adaptations for a shorter timeframe, a different physical setting, or a group with different needs than those originally envisaged, and expected outcomes describe the impact the session is designed to produce.

Where a session has supporting material beyond its core description — a printable template, a set of discussion or scenario cards, or a self-assessment checklist — a short note at the end of the session directs the reader to the corresponding material in the Toolkit Annex, where all such materials are collected together.

Module 1 – Safe & Empowering Learning Environment

1.1 NFE Icebreakers and Trust-Building for Sailing Groups

This session introduces instructors to practical non-formal education icebreakers and trust-building activities that help create a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment for women in sailing groups. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to facilitate trust-building activities in group settings, create a safe and supportive group atmosphere, and increase participant comfort and engagement from the start.

- **Duration:** 45–60 min
- **Location:** marina/harbor area, classroom

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors facilitating group learning and team-based activities
- Instructors working with adult learners
- Instructors working with women returning to sport after a long break

Materials needed

- small ball or soft object
- rope (optional)
- flipchart or paper (optional)
- A short trainer cheat-sheet with 3–4 ready-to-use pair questions

Coaching notes

- Avoiding assumptions about participants' abilities
- Ensuring equal opportunities to participate and lead
- Allowing space for mistakes and learning
- Using encouraging and non-judgmental communication
- Supporting confidence and gradual responsibility
- Keep the tone relaxed and supportive from the beginning
- Avoid putting pressure on participants to speak or perform
- Encourage participation, but respect personal boundaries
- Use humour and positive reinforcement to reduce tension

- Observe group dynamics and adapt pace if needed

Step-by-step

(optional) Step 0. A short technical/safety brief (on the water activity) before starting the icebreakers.

Step 1 – Introduction (5 min). The instructor briefly explains that the activity aims to help participants get to know each other and feel comfortable in the group. Emphasise that there are no right or wrong answers.

Step 2 – Name & Sailing Association Game (10 min). Participants stand in a circle. Each person says their name and one word they associate with sailing (e.g. wind, freedom, fear). The next participant repeats the previous names and adds their own. Continue around the circle.

Step 3 – Pair Connection Task (10 min). Participants form pairs and share:

- why they joined the sailing activity;
- one concern or expectation

After 5 minutes, each participant introduces their partner to the group.

Step 4 – Group Balance Challenge (10 min). Using a rope or imaginary line, the group must organise themselves (e.g. by sailing experience, confidence level, or expectations) without speaking loudly or rushing. This encourages cooperation and non-verbal communication.

Step 5 – Short Reflection (5 min). Ask participants:

- How did you feel during the activities?;
- What helped you feel more comfortable?

Link this to the importance of trust and communication in sailing.

Variations

- Use smaller groups if participants feel uncomfortable in a full circle
- Replace speaking activities with writing or drawing for more reserved participants
- Adapt the group challenge to a simple physical coordination task
- Shorten activities if time is limited before sailing
- Conduct part of the activity on the boat (dock) for more realism
- Works well both as a themed walking tour and as part of a water-based session — the format is flexible across locations and activity types.

Expected outcomes

- participants feel more comfortable and connected within the group
- increased trust between participants and instructor
- reduced initial anxiety or hesitation

- improved communication and openness during the session

1.2 Understanding Women's Barriers in Sailing and Creating Emotional Safety

This session helps instructors understand common barriers women face in sailing and provides practical tools to create emotionally safe learning environments where participants feel supported and confident to engage. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to identify common barriers women experience in sailing, recognise how emotional safety influences learning and participation, apply simple techniques to create a supportive environment, and adapt communication to reduce anxiety and build confidence.

- **Duration:** 40-50 min
- **Location:** classroom, marina/harbor area

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors facilitating group learning and team-based activities
- Instructors working with adult learners
- Instructors working with women returning to sport after a long break

Materials needed

- printed cards or paper
- pens/markers
- flipchart or whiteboard
- Sticky notes
- One-page handout of the SAILWISE survey infographic grounding the discussion in evidence

Coaching notes

- Avoiding assumptions about participants' abilities
- Using encouraging and non-judgmental communication
- Creating a safe space for sharing concerns and experiences
- Respecting personal boundaries and willingness to share
- Supporting confidence and emotional safety
- Create a calm and respectful atmosphere before starting

- Do not force participants to share personal concerns
- Acknowledge all contributions without judgement
- Use neutral and supportive language
- Translate identified barriers into concrete teaching adjustments
- Build in a short scheduled break
- Add a dockside variant for trainers who cannot secure an indoor meeting space.

Step-by-step

Step 1 – Introduction (5 min). The instructor explains that understanding participants' experiences and concerns helps create a better learning environment. Emphasise that sharing is voluntary and there are no right or wrong answers.

Step 2 – Individual Reflection (10 min). Participants receive a card and are asked to write down: one concern about sailing; one expectation or motivation They can keep it anonymous if preferred.

Step 3 – Small Group Sharing (10–15 min). Participants form small groups (2–3 people) and share their reflections. Encourage listening without interrupting or judging.

Step 4 – Group Mapping (10 min). Using sticky notes, each participant writes 1–2 words for their own concern/expectation and places them on a shared board themselves. In small groups, participants cluster the notes into common themes (e.g. fear of mistakes, responsibility, lack of experience). The instructor briefly shares the SAILWISE survey infographic, showing that a transnational survey of 202 women identified similar barriers — comparing the group's own themes to this evidence.

Step 5 – Linking to Practice (10 min). In the same small groups, participants generate 1–2 concrete actions instructors could take to reduce their identified barrier, then share in a quick round (30 sec each group). The instructor closes with a brief synthesis (clear instructions, calm tone, step-by-step learning) rather than a full recap. Summarise practical actions (clear instructions, calm tone, step-by-step learning).

Variations

- Use anonymous sticky notes instead of direct sharing
- Conduct the activity in pairs for more privacy
- Use pre-prepared barrier cards if participants struggle to express ideas
- Shorten the reflection phase if time is limited
- Integrate this activity as a short check-in before sailing

Expected outcomes

- increased awareness of barriers affecting women in sailing
- improved instructor understanding of participant needs

- stronger sense of emotional safety in the group
- better communication between participants and instructor

1.3 Creating Psychological Safety on the Water

This session equips instructors with practical strategies to create a psychologically safe learning environment during sailing activities, helping participants feel confident to try, make mistakes, and actively engage on the boat. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to recognise factors that influence psychological safety on the boat, apply communication strategies that reduce stress and anxiety, support participants during first practical sailing tasks, and create conditions where participants feel safe to try and learn.

- **Duration:** 40-50 min
- **Location:** marina/harbor area, classroom, on the water activity

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors facilitating group learning and team-based activities
- Instructors working with adult learners
- Instructors working with women returning to sport after a long break

Materials needed

- boat access
- basic sailing equipment
- optional: scenario cards

Coaching notes

- Avoiding assumptions about participants' abilities
- Ensuring equal opportunities to participate and take responsibility
- Allowing space for mistakes during practical tasks
- Using calm and clear communication under pressure
- Supporting confidence in unfamiliar or stressful situations
- Use clear, simple instructions during tasks
- Avoid raising your voice or rushing participants
- Allow participants time to process and react
- Step in only when necessary for safety

- Reinforce effort, not only successful performance

Step-by-step

Step 1 – Introduction (5 min). The instructor explains the concept of psychological safety and why it is important in sailing, especially during first on-water experiences.

Step 2 – Scenario Demonstration (10 min). The instructor presents two short scenarios:

- one with a controlling, high-pressure instructor;
- one with a calm, supportive instructor

Participants briefly discuss differences in how they would feel in each situation.

Step 3 – Guided Practice on Boat (20 min). Participants take turns performing a simple sailing-related task (e.g. holding the helm, adjusting a rope, basic manoeuvre). The “instructor” (role-play) must:

- give clear, calm instructions;
- allow time for the participant to act;
- avoid taking over immediately

Other participants observe communication style and behaviour.

Step 4 – Observation and Feedback (10 min). Observers share: what made the situation feel safe; what increased or reduced stress Instructor highlights key behaviours (tone of voice, patience, clarity).

Step 5 – Reflection (5 min). Group reflection:

- What helped you feel more confident?;
- What would you change in your own teaching?.

Variations

- Use clear, simple instructions during tasks
- Avoid raising your voice or rushing participants
- Allow participants time to process and react
- Step in only when necessary for safety
- Reinforce effort, not only successful performance

Expected outcomes

- instructors understand how their behaviour affects participant confidence
- improved communication during practical sailing tasks
- increased awareness of psychological safety in training
- more supportive and inclusive learning environments on the boat

1.4 Normalising Fear, Mistakes, and Gradual Responsibility in Sailing

This session helps instructors learn how to introduce responsibility gradually and normalise fear and mistakes as part of the learning process, supporting women to build confidence and engage actively in sailing tasks. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to recognise common fears related to responsibility in sailing, apply strategies for gradual exposure to responsibility, support participants in learning through mistakes, and create a learning environment where risk-taking feels safe.

- **Duration:** 45-60 min
- **Location:** marina/harbor area, on the boat (dock), on the water activity

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors facilitating group learning and team-based activities
- Instructors working with adult learners
- Instructors working with women returning to sport after a long break

Materials needed

- boat access
- basic sailing equipment
- optional: scenario cards or role descriptions

Coaching notes

- Avoiding assumptions about participants' ability to take responsibility
- Allowing gradual exposure to tasks and decision-making
- Avoiding taking control too quickly
- Supporting learning through mistakes
- Encouraging confidence in leadership roles
- Adding a short trainer language guide: phrases that normalise fear, phrases to avoid, and prompts to use in the post-sail debrief.
- Break tasks into small, manageable steps
- Clearly explain that mistakes are part of learning
- Avoid taking over immediately when participants hesitate

- Use calm guidance instead of correction
- Gradually increase responsibility based on participant comfort

Step-by-step

Step 1 – Introduction (5–10 min). The instructor introduces the concept of gradual responsibility in sailing and explains that fear of responsibility (e.g. steering, decision-making) is common and part of learning.

Step 2 – Responsibility Mapping (10 min). Participants identify typical roles on a boat (e.g. crew, rope handling, helm, decision-making). They briefly discuss which roles might feel more or less intimidating for beginners.

Step 3 – Gradual Task Progression (20–25 min). Participants perform a simple sailing-related task in stages:

- Stage 1: observe the task;
- Stage 2: assist the instructor;
- Stage 3: perform the task with guidance;
- Stage 4: perform independently

Examples:; holding the helm; adjusting a rope; basic manoeuvre.

The instructor deliberately allows time for participants to try, make mistakes, and adjust.

Step 4 – Controlled “Mistake” Scenario (10 min). The instructor introduces a low-risk situation where a small mistake may occur (e.g. incorrect timing, hesitation). Participants are encouraged to:

- stay calm
- try to correct the action
- reflect on what happened

The focus is on learning, not performance.

Step 5 – Reflection (10 min). Group discussion:

- When did you feel most confident?;
- What made responsibility easier or harder?;
- How did mistakes affect your learning?

The instructor links this to teaching practice and the importance of progression.

Variations

- Run the progression entirely on land before going on the boat
- Use role-play scenarios instead of real sailing tasks
- Adjust difficulty depending on experience level
- Shorten to one task if time is limited

- Use pairs so participants support each other

Expected outcomes

- increased instructor awareness of fear related to responsibility
- improved ability to structure gradual learning progression
- greater confidence in supporting participants through mistakes
- more inclusive and confidence-building sailing sessions

Module 2 – Non-Formal Education Tools for Sailing

2.1 Reflection Circles Before and After Sailing Sessions

To integrate structured reflection into sailing practice, helping participants become more aware of their learning process, emotions, and group dynamics before and after sailing activities. This strengthens self-awareness, communication, and learning transfer from practice to insight. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to develop participants' ability to reflect on their learning and performance, strengthen communication and active listening within the group, encourage emotional awareness before and after sailing practice, and support instructors in identifying group needs and adjusting teaching accordingly.

- **Duration:** before sailing: 15-20 min / after sailing: 30-40 min Total: ~45-60 min
- **Location:** Marina, dock area, or quiet space onshore near the boats

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors teaching intermediate sailing skills
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors facilitating group learning and team-based activities
- Instructors working with adult learners
- Instructors working with women returning to sport after a long break

Materials needed

- Small seating circle setup (benches, ropes, or sitting on dock)
- Optional: talking object (e.g., rope knot or buoy)
- 6–8 ready-to-use prompt cards covering different moments (first sail, first mistake, first leadership role, closing circle)

Coaching notes

- Be aware of the tendency to dominate reflection with “technical feedback” only.
- Avoid assuming quieter participants have nothing to say.
- Be mindful of unconscious bias where certain voices (e.g., more experienced or more vocal participants) may be unintentionally prioritized over others.
- Keep questions simple and open-ended
- Allow silence; do not rush participants to respond
- Validate all contributions without judgment

- Ensure equal speaking time for all participants
- Use consistent routine to create psychological safety

Step-by-step

Before sailing:

Step 1 - Gather participants in a circle in a quiet area near the boats..

Step 2 - Explain the purpose. focusing on mindset, expectations, and readiness.

Step 3 - Ask a simple guiding question (e.g., “How do you feel today about going on the water?” or “What do you want to focus on today?”).

Step 4 - Invite each participant to speak briefly without interruption.

Step 5 - Instructor summarizes key points and highlights group readiness.

After sailing:

Step 1 - Reform the circle in the same or similar location..

Step 2 - Ask reflective questions (e.g., “What went well today?”, “What did you learn?”, “How did you feel during the ”, “What is one thing you would try differently in the next ”).

Step 3 - Encourage each participant to share one insight or feeling..

Step 4 - Acknowledge contributions without correcting or evaluating..

Step 5 - Close the session by linking reflections to future learning goals..

Variations

- Use paired reflection instead of group circle for shy groups
- Replace verbal sharing with writing or drawing reflections
- Shorten reflection to “one word check-in” when time is limited
- Use movement-based reflection (e.g., positioning in space to show feelings)
- An informal, social setting (e.g. paired with a shared meal/barbecue) can encourage deeper reflection and longer, more open sharing — particularly effective for a closing-day circle.

Expected outcomes

- Increased self-awareness among participants Improved group communication and trust Better connection between learning experience and reflection Enhanced instructor understanding of group dynamics and needs

2.2 Using Reflection to Process Fear, Stress, and Responsibility

To support participants in recognising and verbalising emotional responses such as fear, stress, and responsibility during sailing activities. The session helps normalise emotional reactions, improve coping strategies, and create a safer learning environment through guided reflection. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to help participants identify emotional reactions during sailing situations, develop basic strategies for coping with fear and stress on the water, strengthen responsibility awareness in individual and group sailing roles, and equip instructors to facilitate emotionally safe learning environments.

- **Duration:** 45 minutes
- **Location:** Marina, dock area, classroom, or quiet onshore space after sailing

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors working with adult learners
- Instructors working with women returning to sport after a long break

Materials needed

- Reflection circle seating setup
- Optional emotion scale (1–5 or colour-based)
- Flipchart or whiteboard (optional)
- Reflection prompt cards (optional)
- Object for speaking turn (rope, buoy, etc.)

Coaching notes

- specific Avoid interpreting fear or stress as lack of competence. Do not rush participants toward “positive thinking” or quick solutions. Be mindful not to overemphasise technical feedback at the expense of emotional processing. Ensure equal space for all voices and respect silence as part of reflection.
- Normalise emotional reactions as part of learning sailing
- Keep tone calm and non-evaluative
- Allow silence and reflection time without pressure
- Encourage specificity in emotional language (e.g. “nervous”, “focused”, “overwhelmed”)
- Avoid turning reflection into a technical debrief

Step-by-step

Step 1 - Introduction and framing: Gather participants in a quiet area. Briefly explain the purpose: this is not a technical debrief, but a space to explore emotional experiences during sailing, especially fear, stress, and responsibility. Emphasise that all reactions are normal and valuable for learning.

Step 2 - Grounding and safety check: Invite participants to take a moment to settle (sit comfortably, breathe, notice surroundings). Ask a simple grounding question such as: “How do you feel right now after sailing?” Optionally introduce a 1–5 scale for stress or confidence and let participants show it with fingers or cards.

Step 3 - Guided individual reflection: Ask participants to silently reflect on two prompts:

- “When did I feel most challenged today?”
- “What emotion was strongest for me on the water?” Give them quiet time without interruption. Encourage honesty without judgment.

Step 4 - Circle sharing – emotional awareness. Use a talking object to structure turn-taking. Each participant shares briefly:

- one moment of challenge or strong emotion
- one word describing their feeling (e.g. nervous, focused, stressed, confident)

The instructor listens actively without commenting or correcting. Avoid technical analysis at this stage.

Step 5 - Focus on responsibility and coping. Facilitate deeper reflection with guiding questions:

- “What was your responsibility in the boat today?”
- “What helped you manage difficult moments?”
- “Did anything from the group support you?”

Encourage participants to recognise both individual and team contributions to managing stress.

Step 6 - Group synthesis and normalisation. Summarise key themes you heard (without naming individuals). Highlight common experiences (e.g. fear before manoeuvres, stress in wind changes, importance of communication). Normalise emotions as part of sailing learning.

Step 7 - Closing reflection. Ask each participant to share one takeaway word: “Today I learned that...” or “I am leaving with...”

End by reinforcing that emotional awareness improves sailing performance, safety, and teamwork over time.

Variations

- Use pair-sharing instead of full group circle for sensitive groups
- Replace verbal reflection with written or visual expression
- Use weather metaphors (stormy, calm, windy) to describe emotions

- Shorten to a 5-minute “emotion check-in” during sailing breaks
- Integrate reflection immediately after specific manoeuvres or challenges

Expected outcomes

- Increased emotional awareness in sailing contexts
- Improved ability to cope with fear and stress on the water
- Stronger sense of responsibility within the crew
- Greater psychological safety and trust in group learning environments

2.3 Cooperative Games for Team-Building on Deck

To strengthen cooperation, communication, and trust within sailing crews through structured non-competitive games on deck. The session uses playful, task-based activities to develop teamwork skills that directly support safety, coordination, and efficiency during sailing. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to develop effective communication between crew members in dynamic environments, strengthen trust and cooperation within the sailing team, improve problem-solving and coordination under time or task constraints, and encourage inclusive participation and shared responsibility on board.

- **Duration:** 45 minutes
- **Location:** Deck of the boat (moored or stationary), marina area

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors working with adult learners
- Instructors working with women returning to sport after a long break

Materials needed

- Ropes, fenders, or sailing equipment (safe and flexible items)
- Blindfolds or limited-visibility tools (optional for variations)
- Small objects to move or organise (cones, knots, markers)
- Stopwatch or timer (optional)
- Clear deck space for movement

Coaching notes

- specific Avoid turning the activity into a competitive performance test. Be mindful not to assign roles based on assumptions about strength, leadership, or experience. Ensure equal

participation opportunities and actively prevent dominance by more confident individuals. Focus on collaboration rather than speed or “winning.”

- Make sure to explain the rules thoroughly as it may be confusing for participants at first
- Prioritise cooperation over speed or “winning”; the goal is group functioning, not performance
- Observe group dynamics carefully and intervene only when necessary to balance participation
- Rotate roles (leader, observer, mover, communicator) to avoid fixed hierarchies
- Encourage clear, simple communication rather than complex instructions under pressure
- Reinforce positive teamwork behaviours immediately (e.g. listening, supporting, adjusting)

Step-by-step

Step 1 - Warm-up game. “Silent Equipment Order” (10 min): Teams of 4–6

Each team receives 5–8 items (ropes, fenders, knots, small gear).

Task: Arrange items in a specific order (e.g. size, importance for sailing, or colour if applicable).

Rules:

- No speaking
- Only non-verbal communication allowed
- Everyone must physically participate Focus: awareness, coordination, non-verbal communication

Step 2 - Main game. “Blind Navigator” (15 min):

Run at anchor or alongside — not recommended underway, due to the blindfold / restricted-movement element. Teams of 4–6

One participant is the “navigator” (blindfolded or eyes closed), another is the “voice guide”, others are safety coordinators.

Task: Guide the blindfolded person safely across the deck (or marked safe area) to collect and return with an object.

Rules:

- Only the designated guide can speak
- Others can only support through positioning and gestures
- Teams must ensure safety at all times

Focus: trust, clarity of communication, responsibility distribution

Step 3 - Coordination challenge. “Boat Balance Task” (10 min):

Run at anchor or alongside — not recommended underway, due to the blindfold / restricted-movement element. Same teams

Each team must move 3–5 objects (ropes, buckets, fenders) from one side of the deck to another using a constraint. Choose one constraint:

- Only one person moves at a time
- Everyone must stay physically connected (holding a rope)
- Objects must not touch the ground

Focus: planning, shared strategy, adaptation under pressure

Step 4 - Reflection in action (5 min). Pause all teams. Ask:

- “What improved your coordination?”
- “Where did communication break down?”
- “How does this apply to real sailing situations?”

Teams quickly adjust their strategy before the final attempt.

Step 5 - Final improvement round (3–5 min). Repeat one chosen task (usually Blind Navigator or Balance Task). Teams apply improved communication and coordination strategies.

Variations

- Adjust team size to pairs (2–3 people) for very beginner groups, or increase to 6–7 people for more complex coordination challenges
- Replace blindfolds with “limited communication rules” only (e.g. no words, only hand signals) if safety or comfort is a concern
- Swap physical movement tasks with dock-based problem-solving (e.g. rope systems, knot puzzles, sail setup simulation) in bad weather or limited deck space
- Add a role rotation system so each participant experiences guiding, following, and observing roles
- Increase difficulty by introducing time pressure or changing constraints mid-task to simulate real sailing unpredictability

Expected outcomes

- Improved communication and coordination within sailing crews under simple constraints
- Increased trust between participants through shared problem-solving tasks
- Greater awareness of individual roles and responsibility in team-based sailing situations
- Stronger group cohesion and willingness to support others during learning challenges

2.4 Peer Teaching as a Confidence-Building Tool

To use peer-to-peer teaching as a structured method to strengthen confidence, reinforce learning, and encourage active participation. By alternating between learner and instructor roles, participants deepen their understanding of sailing skills while developing communication, leadership, and self-efficacy. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to reinforce

sailing skills through teaching others, build confidence by experiencing the instructor role in a safe setting, develop clear communication and explanation skills, and encourage mutual support and shared learning within the group.

- **Duration:** 45 minutes
- **Location:** Deck of the boat (moored or stationary), marina area

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors working with adult learners
- Instructors working with women returning to sport after a long break

Materials needed

- Sailing equipment (ropes, knots, sail handling tools, etc.)
- Simple skill cards or task instructions
- Markers or visual aids (optional)
- Safe working space on deck or dock
- Timer (optional)

Coaching notes

- specific Avoid positioning “more experienced” participants as default leaders. Be careful not to reinforce hierarchy based on confidence or communication style. Ensure that all participants, including quieter ones, are given equal opportunity to teach and be heard. Focus on learning through teaching, not performance evaluation.
- Keep tasks simple and clearly structured to avoid cognitive overload
- Encourage participants to use their own words rather than technical jargon
- Support quieter participants by pairing them in safe, supportive dyads
- Reinforce that mistakes in teaching are part of the learning process
- Observe interactions and ensure balanced participation in each pair/group

Step-by-step

Step 1 - Introduction and framing (5 min). Gather participants in a circle on deck, dock, or classroom space. Explain that the session is based on learning by teaching: everyone will both explain and perform a simple sailing skill. Emphasise that the goal is not technical perfection but clarity, confidence, and communication. Reinforce that “if you can explain it simply, you understand it well”.

Step 2 - Formation of pairs or triads (5 min). Divide participants into pairs (preferred) or groups of three if numbers require it. Assign each group a single, simple sailing task, for example:

- tying a bowline knot
- preparing a line for docking
- basic sail handling sequence (hoist/lower simulation)
- naming and pointing out parts of the boat

Ensure tasks are achievable within the time frame and familiar enough to allow focus on explanation rather than discovery.

Step 3 - Individual preparation (5 min). Give participants a short moment to mentally prepare how they would teach the skill. Encourage them to think in simple steps:

- “What is the first thing I would say?”
- “How would I demonstrate it clearly?”
- “What mistakes might the learner make?”

No formal notes are required, but they may mentally rehearse or quietly practice.

Step 4 - Peer teaching round 1 (10–12 min). In each pair:

- Person A teaches Person B
- Person B follows instructions and performs the task

The “teacher” must:

- explain step-by-step
- demonstrate slowly if needed
- check understanding by asking questions (“Does this make sense?”)

The “learner” must:

- ask at least one clarification question
- verbalise any confusion or difficulty

Instructor circulates, observing communication clarity and confidence, but does not interrupt unless needed.

Step 5 - Role switch (10–12 min). Participants swap roles:

- Person B now teaches
- Person A now learns

Encourage participants to use insights from the first round to improve their teaching approach (simpler language, clearer structure, better demonstration).

Step 6 - Group reflection and debrief (10 min). Bring everyone back into a circle. Facilitate reflection with guiding questions:

- “What was harder: doing the skill or explaining it?”;

- “What helped you explain more clearly?”;
- “Did teaching someone else change your understanding?”;
- “How did it feel to be responsible for someone else’s learning?”

Highlight key themes such as confidence, clarity, patience, and empathy in instruction.

Variations

- Use triads instead of pairs, adding an observer role who gives supportive feedback
- Assign different skill levels of tasks depending on group experience
- Replace live teaching with “teach-back storytelling” on shore when on-water conditions are not suitable
- Add a time constraint (2–3 minutes per teaching round) for more focus and clarity
- Use video recording for self-reflection in advanced groups

Expected outcomes

- Increased confidence in performing and explaining sailing skills
- Improved understanding through active teaching
- Stronger communication and articulation of technical knowledge
- Enhanced mutual trust and peer support within the group

2.5 Storytelling and Debriefing for Learning and Empowerment

To use storytelling and structured debriefing as tools to help participants make sense of their sailing experiences, strengthen learning retention, and build confidence. The session supports meaning-making by turning practical sailing moments into shared stories that reinforce learning, resilience, and group identity. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to transform sailing experiences into meaningful learning insights, strengthen participants’ ability to articulate personal progress and challenges, build group cohesion through shared storytelling, and support empowerment by recognising individual and collective achievements.

- **Duration:** 45 minutes
- **Location:** Deck of the boat (moored or stationary), marina area Best organised as a closing-day session

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors working with adult learners

- Instructors working with women returning to sport after a long break

Materials needed

- Seating in a circle (deck chairs, benches, or dock space)
- Optional storytelling prompts (cards or printed questions)
- Flipchart or whiteboard for capturing key themes (optional)
- Object for speaking turn (rope, buoy, or token)
- A 3–4 question prompt template trainers can adapt

Coaching notes

- specific Avoid framing debriefing as a technical evaluation or correction session. Be careful not to prioritise “correct” sailing language over personal meaning. Ensure that all stories are valued equally, regardless of skill level or experience. Be mindful of reinforcing only high-performance narratives; focus also on effort, emotion, and learning process.
- Encourage storytelling in simple, personal language rather than technical terms
- Give equal attention to all stories, not only “successful” ones
- Allow pauses and silence as reflection takes time
- Help participants connect emotions to learning, not just actions
- Summarise group insights to reinforce shared meaning and progress

Step-by-step

Step 1 - Introduction and framing. Gather participants in a circle. Explain that the goal is to reflect on sailing through stories, not technical analysis. Emphasise that every experience is valuable, including challenges and mistakes.

Step 2 - Individual reflection. Ask participants to silently recall one moment from the sailing session that stood out (positive, difficult, surprising, or emotional). Prompt: “Think of a moment that you remember clearly from today.”

Step 3 - Story sharing round. Using a talking object, each participant shares their short story (1–2 minutes each). Encourage simple structure:

- What happened?
- How did I feel?
- What did I learn?

No interruption or correction is allowed. The instructor listens actively and notes recurring themes.

Step 4 - Group debriefing and meaning-making. Facilitate a group discussion based on shared stories:

- “What patterns do we notice in our experiences?”

- “What helped people succeed or cope with challenges?”
- “What can we take forward to the next sailing ”

Highlight emotional resilience, teamwork, and learning moments.

Step 5 - Empowerment closing. Invite each participant to complete one sentence:

- “Today I discovered that I can...” or
- “Next time I will try...”

Close by reinforcing collective progress and shared learning identity.

Variations

- Use pairs or small groups for storytelling before sharing in plenary
- Replace verbal storytelling with drawing or visual mapping of experiences
- Focus only on one theme (e.g. “challenge moments” or “teamwork moments”)
- Shorten into a rapid “one story, one learning” format after sailing breaks
- Use role-play to re-enact key moments from the sailing session

Expected outcomes

- Stronger ability to reflect on and articulate sailing experiences
- Increased confidence through recognition of personal progress
- Enhanced group cohesion and shared identity
- Improved learning retention through narrative-based reflection

Module 3 – Inclusive Coaching Techniques

3.1 Encouraging and Non-Directive Feedback in Sailing Instruction

To move away from the traditional, often loud, directive style of instruction. By using non-directive feedback, instructors help women sailors build their own "feel" for the boat, promoting autonomy and reducing the anxiety often caused by constant correction. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to 1. Understand the difference between directive ("Pull that line") and non-directive ("How does the sail look?") feedback. 2. Practice using forward-looking, actionable feedback loops. 3. Learn to use a "firm yet gentle" tone to establish trust and authority simultaneously.

- **Duration:** 90 minutes (45 min land-based theory/roleplay, 45 min on-water application).
- **Location:** Marina/Classroom for roleplay; On the boat for practical application.

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors facilitating group learning and team-based activities
- Instructors working with adult learners

Materials needed

- Flipchart/whiteboard, "Scenario Cards" for roleplay, markers, and a sailboat for the practical part. A one-page phrasebook contrasting directive vs. non-directive formulations of the same instruction, as a hand-out.

Coaching notes

- Questions for coaches to consider:
 - Do I believe that "shouting" or "commanding" is the only way to ensure safety?
 - Am I assuming women need to be told exactly what to do because they might be more cautious?.
- More coaching tips:
 - Use "We" instead of "I" to foster a collaborative environment.
 - Wait 3 seconds before correcting a non-safety mistake; give the student time to notice it first.
 - Positively reinforce clarifying questions—frame them as a safety asset.

- Maintain standard commands for high-stress maneuvers, but use a calm tone to prevent panic.

Step-by-step

Step 1 - Intro (15m). Discuss the Situation-Behavior-Impact model. Explain why focusing on the action, not the person, prevents the student from taking mistakes personally.

Step 2 - The "Silent" Error (15m). Roleplay. An instructor watches a student tie a wrong knot. Instead of correcting it, the instructor asks: "Tell me how you want that knot to hold the boat?" allowing the student to find the error.

Step 3 - Feedback Loop Roleplay (20m). Working in pairs, participants practise converting directive phrases ("Don't do that") into non-directive ones ("Next time, try..."), using the phrasebook as a reference. After each attempt, the partner gives brief peer feedback — was the phrasing genuinely non-directive, and would it land calmly with a student? Rotate roles so everyone practises both giving the phrase and giving feedback.

Step 4 - On-Water Coaching (45m). During a maneuver (e.g., tacking), the coach must only speak using questions or standardized commands to allow the crew to execute based on their own assessment.

Variations

- Blindfolded Awareness: To practice non-directive feedback on land, have one person guide a blindfolded partner through a simple task using only questions like "Where do you feel the tension?"
- Works best delivered as a deliberate pair with Activity 3.2 (Role Rotation) — non-directive feedback as the language layer, role rotation as the structural layer.

Expected outcomes

- Instructors will be able to deliver feedback that focuses on the process rather than the outcome.
- Students will show increased initiative and less "paralysis" when making mistakes.
- A safer, judgment-free learning environment that encourages retention.

Additional materials for this session (templates, cards, or checklists) are available in the Toolkit Annex.

3.2 Role Rotation: Supporting Women to Try All Roles on the Boat

To dismantle gender stereotypes where women are often relegated to "minimal contribution" roles. By systematically rotating positions, instructors ensure every woman develops technical competence at the helm, mast, and bow, fostering true autonomy and skill progression. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to 1. Identify and address the internal and external

barriers that prevent women from taking the helm or lead roles. 2. Learn how to implement a structured rotation plan during a single sailing session. 3. Practice "Peer-to-Peer" briefing techniques to reinforce learning during role swaps.

- **Duration:** 120 minutes (30 min theory/planning, 90 min on-water rotation drills).
- **Location:** Classroom/Dock for briefing; On the boat for the practical rotation.

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors teaching intermediate sailing skills
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors working with adult learners
- Instructors working with women returning to sport after a long break
-

Materials needed

- Rotation chart (visual board) - template in the attachment
- Stopwatches
- standard boat equipment.

Coaching notes

- Questions for coaches to consider:
 - Am I subconsciously choosing the strongest-looking person for the winches or the most "confident" person for the helm?
 - Am I afraid that rotating roles will make the maneuvers "messy" or slow down the lesson?
- More coaching tips:
 - Formalize the rotation—don't make it optional, or the most "cautious" students will opt-out.
 - If a student is nervous at the helm, stay physically close but keep your hands off the tiller to build their situational confidence.
 - Frame mistakes during rotation as "technical data" for the whole crew to learn from.
 - Encourage the use of body weight over pure muscle for heavy tasks like winching.

Step-by-step

Step 1 - The "Comfort Zone" Discussion (15m). Instructors discuss why students often stick to roles they feel "safe" in and how this hinders long-term retention.

Step 2 - Creating the Rotation Map (15m). Coaches design a visual chart where every 20 minutes, positions shift (e.g., Helm → Main Sheet → Jib → Bow).

Step 3 - The 60-Second Handover (Practical). During the on-water session, at each rotation, the person leaving the role must give one "Pro-Tip" to the person entering it.

Step 3 - Action Maneuvers (75m). Execute tacking and jibing circuits where the maneuver cannot begin until the new person in the role gives the "Ready" signal.

Variations

- Micro-Role Focus: If the group is very large, rotate "sub-tasks" (e.g., one person handles only the traveler, another only the jib car) to ensure everyone touches the hardware.

Expected outcomes

- Reduction in "role-paralysis" and increased willingness to take the helm.
- Improved team empathy as crew members understand the physical and timing challenges of every position.
- Higher technical proficiency across the entire group.

Additional materials for this session (templates, cards, or checklists) are available in the Toolkit Annex.

3.3 Communication Techniques that Reduce Anxiety and Build Confidence

To equip instructors with verbal and non-verbal tools that lower student stress levels. Effective communication is a critical technical tool that ensures safety and helps women confidently assert their knowledge. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to 1. Master the "closed-loop" communication system to eliminate ambiguity. 2. Learn to use "On-the-Spot Scripts" to empower students in tricky moments. 3. Practice "firm yet gentle" tones to maintain authority while building rapport.

- **Duration:** 60 minutes.
- **Location:** Classroom/Marina and on the boat.

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors working with adult learners

Materials needed

- Flashcards (in the attachment) with scenario scripts

- pens, and markers.

Coaching notes

- Questions for coaches to consider:
 - Am I assuming that silence or hesitation from a student means they don't know the answer, rather than they are just processing fear or new information?
- More coaching tips:
 - Standardize responses to eliminate confusion during noisy conditions.
 - Positively reinforce students who speak up when they don't understand something.
 - Use a calm, quiet tone like "Let's take a break and reset" to de-escalate tension.
 - Model vulnerability by sharing your own past communication mistakes.

Step-by-step

Step 1 - Intro to Closed-Loop (10m). Explain the 3-step process: Sender gives command -> Receiver repeats it -> Sender gives final execution.

Step 2 - Script Practice (15m). Instructors use flashcards to practice "Go-To" phrases for students, such as "Skipper, not clear! Please repeat" or "Can I get a second set of hands?".

Step 3 - Managing Toxic Behavior (15m). Discussion on how to use firm, specific language to set boundaries and maintain team cohesion if a crew member becomes negative.

Step 4 - Role Rotation Drill (20m). On the boat, instructors rotate the "Communication Lead" role, forcing everyone to practice calling clear, loud commands addressed by name.

Variations

- Silent Maneuver: Complete a simple task (e.g., hoisting a sail) in total silence to force reliance on non-verbal cues and situational awareness.

Expected outcomes

- Reduced student anxiety and "paralysis" through clearer expectations.
- Improved safety due to standardized, confirmed verbal exchanges.
- Increased student confidence in using their voice on board.

Additional materials for this session (templates, cards, or checklists) are available in the Toolkit Annex.

3.4 Teaching Mixed-Ability Groups in a Supportive Environment

To provide instructors with strategies to manage groups where sailing experience varies significantly. In women-centered programs, participants often arrive with different life stages and technical backgrounds ; this session ensures that beginners feel safe while experienced sailors remain engaged and challenged. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to 1. Identify

techniques for "differentiation" (adjusting tasks to match individual skill levels). 2. Learn to use peer-teaching as a tool to empower advanced students and support beginners. 3. Practice setting group goals that value progress over perfection for all levels.

- **Duration:** 75 minutes.
- **Location:** Classroom or marina for the initial briefing, followed by application on the boat.

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors teaching intermediate sailing skills
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors working with adult learners

Materials needed

- "Skill-Level Scenarios" cards
- whiteboard/flipchart
- "Peer-Mentor" stickers or badges.

Coaching notes

- Questions for coaches to consider:
 - Am I defaulting to giving all the "active" tasks to the experienced sailor while the beginner just watches?
 - Am I afraid that letting an experienced student lead will undermine my authority as an instructor?
- More coaching tips:
 - Use "buddy systems" to pair different levels, emphasizing that the mentor learns by explaining and the beginner learns by doing.
 - Avoid comparing students; focus on "Individual Bests" to build a culture of support rather than competition.
 - Keep the "why" consistent: explain the maneuver to the whole group, but differentiate the "how" based on individual physical or technical readiness.
 - Positively reinforce the experienced student's leadership skills, not just their technical sailing ability.

Step-by-step

Step 1 - The Range Discovery (15m). Instructors practice "pre-sail checks" where they ask students to rate their comfort level with specific tasks (e.g., helming vs. winching) using a 1-5 scale.

Step 2 - Task Layering (20m). Workshop on how to split a maneuver into "layers." For a tack: the beginner focuses on moving safely across the cockpit, while the intermediate student focuses on jib sheet timing.

Step 3 - Peer-Teaching Setup (20m). Instructors role-play assigning an experienced student to "mentor" a beginner on a specific knot, focusing on the mentor giving non-directive feedback rather than just doing it for them.

Step 4 - Group Debriefing (20m). Practice leading a debrief where the "win" is defined differently for each student (e.g., "I held the tiller for 5 minutes" vs "I executed a perfect heavy-wind jibe").

Variations

- Shore-Based Skill Clinics: If the weather is too rough for beginners, have the advanced students lead "mini-clinics" on land for knots or weather reading.

Expected outcomes

- Beginners feel integrated and safe, reducing the likelihood of "feeling out of place".
- Advanced students develop leadership and teaching competencies.
- A cohesive group dynamic that fosters long-term participation across all skill levels.

3.5 Instructor Behaviour as a Retention and Dropout Factor

To help instructors recognize how their verbal and non-verbal behaviors directly impact a woman's decision to continue or quit sailing. This session addresses the "invisible" social barriers—such as biased attitudes and gendered role expectations—that lead to high female dropout rates. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to 1. Identify specific instructor behaviors (shouting, gender stereotyping, lack of feedback) that contribute to student dropout. 2. Practice "Emotional Safety" coaching to build student confidence and resilience. 3. Learn to celebrate small wins and "Individual Bests" to foster a sense of belonging.

- **Duration:** 60 minutes
- **Location:** Classroom or marina dock.

Target group

- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors working with adult learners
- Instructors working with women returning to sport after a long break

Materials needed

- "Retention vs. Dropout" Checklist
- case studies of common instruction mistakes

- whiteboard.

Coaching notes

- Questions for coaches to consider:
 - Am I focusing my attention on the students who learn the fastest?
 - Do I use a different language when talking to women than I do with men?
 - Am I unintentionally making sailing feel like an "exclusive zone" for only the most competitive?
- More coaching tips:
 - Use the student's name and make eye contact when giving feedback to build rapport.
 - Stop the "Hero Coach" complex—don't jump in to fix a problem; ask a non-directive question first.
 - Explicitly acknowledge that fear is a normal part of the process.
 - Ensure your body language matches your words; stay calm even when the wind picks up.

Step-by-step

Step 1 - The Dropout Reality (15m). Review statistics showing that while many women start sailing, many quit because of feeling "overlooked" or "undermined". Discuss how shouting can shut down the learning process.

Step 2 - The "Shadowing" Workshop (15m). Instructors work in pairs to analyze a scenario where a student makes a mistake. They identify "Retention-Boosting" responses (forward-looking feedback) vs. "Dropout-Triggering" responses (criticism/impatience).

Step 3 - Vulnerability Modeling (15m). Instructors practice sharing a story of their own past failure at sea. This breaks the myth of the "perfect sailor" and creates psychological safety.

Step 4 - Roleplaying Choice (15m). Instructors practice a "firm yet gentle" tone to correct a safety issue while still maintaining the student's dignity and confidence.

Variations

- Student Feedback Loop: Create a mock "30-second debrief" where the instructor asks the student, "What is one thing I did today that helped you feel safe?"

Expected outcomes

- Instructors will adopt coaching styles that prioritize long-term engagement over immediate technical perfection.
- A measurable reduction in student anxiety levels during maneuvers.
- Increased student satisfaction and a higher likelihood of students returning for advanced courses.

Additional materials for this session (templates, cards, or checklists) are available in the Toolkit Annex.

3.6 Adapting Coaching to Different Life Stages and Late Entry Sailors

To enable instructors to tailor their teaching methods for women entering the sport at different stages of life. While the project targets women aged 25–45, it acknowledges that barriers and motivations differ significantly between young professionals, mothers, and those entering later in life. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to 1. Identify specific physical, logistical, and psychological needs of women in various life stages (e.g., career focus, motherhood, retirement transition). 2. Learn to adapt technical instruction to accommodate different physical comfort levels without being patronizing. 3. Practice designing flexible learning "checkpoints" for busy adult learners.

- **Duration:** 75 minutes
- **Location:** Classroom or marina area.

Target group

- Instructors teaching intermediate sailing skills
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors working with adult learners
- Instructors working with women returning to sport after a long break

Materials needed

- "Life-Stage Persona" cards
- Flipchart
- Markers
- "Flexibility Best Practices" handout.

Coaching notes

- Questions for coaches to consider:
 - Am I assuming that an older "late-entry" sailor is less capable of handling technical roles?
 - Am I frustrated by the logistical needs (e.g., childcare, strict schedules) of working mothers?
- More coaching tips:
 - Validate that it is never "too late" to start; highlight that sailing is a lifelong journey.
 - Avoid age-based or role-based assumptions (e.g., don't assume the "career woman" wants to be the tactician and the "grandmother" wants to be the passenger).

- Use relatable role models who started sailing later in life, like Dee Caffari.
- Be patient with "muscle memory" development in older adults; use more frequent, shorter repetitions.

Step-by-step

Step 1 - Life-Stage Personas (20m). Divide instructors into groups. Assign each a "Persona" (e.g., "Marta, 42, seeking a balance between motherhood and career" or "Elena, 65, transitioning to retirement and seeking new community"). Identify their likely fears and motivations.

Step 2 - Technical Adaptation Workshop (20m). Instructors brainstorm how to teach a winch maneuver to someone with less upper-body strength or joint mobility, focusing on "smarter body weight" techniques rather than pure muscle.

Step 3 - Designing Flexibility (20m). Workshop on creating modular schedules (e.g., half-day clinics vs. full weekends) to reduce "time constraint" barriers.

Step 4 - Roleplaying the "Late Entry" Intro (15m). Instructors practice welcoming a student who says, "I'm too old to learn this," using empowering, growth-mindset language.

Variations

- "The Generational Bridge": Have instructors practice an exercise where a younger sailor helps an older sailor with a digital navigation app, while the older sailor shares weather-reading wisdom.

Expected outcomes

- Instructors provide a welcoming environment for women of all ages.
- Program schedules become more inclusive of different life responsibilities.
- Increased retention of "late entry" sailors through tailored physical and psychological support.

Additional materials for this session (templates, cards, or checklists) are available in the Toolkit Annex.

Module 4 – Practical Activity Toolbox

4.1 Confidence-Building Drills on Land

This session is designed to support participants in developing confidence, coordination, and trust in their physical abilities through simple, structured land-based activities. It provides a safe, inclusive, and low-pressure environment where individuals can explore movement, make mistakes, and learn at their own pace without fear of judgment. The session specifically aims to reduce anxiety often associated with new physical or sailing-related tasks by breaking movements down into manageable steps and focusing on gradual progression. This session lays the physical and psychological foundation needed for on-water sailing activities, helping participants feel more prepared, capable, and willing to take on new challenges in a supportive learning environment. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to enable instructors to facilitate confidence-building activities using minimal equipment, develop participants' balance, coordination, and body awareness, equip instructors with strategies to support low-confidence participants, and encourage positive group interaction and peer support.

- **Duration:** 40 min
- **Location:** Any open land space (e.g. marina, beach, grassy area, or indoor room)

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors facilitating group learning and team-based activities

Materials needed

- Chalk, rope, or tape (to mark lines on the ground)
- Small everyday objects (e.g. water bottles, shoes, or bags as markers)
- A printable drill checklist so participants can self-assess.
- Optional: 1–2 lightweight balls

Coaching notes

- Instructors may assume that beginners lack physical ability or confidence.
- Avoid lowering expectations or being overly protective.
- Use inclusive language, offer equal opportunities, and encourage all participants to explore their abilities at their own pace.
- Keep instructions simple and demonstrations clear
- Reinforce effort and small successes

- Encourage creativity with available space and objects
- Foster a supportive, non-judgmental group atmosphere
- Allow participants to adapt movements to their comfort level
- Pair more confident participants with less confident ones for peer-led repetition.

Step-by-step

Step 1 - Warm up (5min). Start with walking around the space, gradually adding arm movements and direction changes. Include simple coordination tasks like clapping patterns or stepping sequences.

Step 2 - Balance drills (5 min): Ask participants to stand on one leg or walk along a line marked with chalk, rope, or imaginary lines. Progress by adding slow movements or turning the head while balancing

Step 3 - Coordination activities (5 min): Use simple throw-and-catch exercises with a ball or improvised object (e.g. socks). Add challenges like clapping before catching or working in pairs.

Step 4 - Mini challenge course (10 min): Create a course using everyday objects as markers. Include walking along lines, stepping around objects, and simple coordination tasks.

Step 5 - Cool-down & reflection (15 min): Finish with gentle stretching and a group discussion about what felt easy, difficult, or surprising.

Variations

- Activities can be easily adapted to suit different group sizes, abilities, environments, and time constraints. For groups with very low confidence or limited mobility, exercises can be simplified by reducing movement complexity, slowing the pace, or allowing additional support (e.g. using a wall, partner assistance, or wider balance lines). Conversely, for more confident or physically able participants, tasks can be made more challenging by increasing speed, adding multitasking elements (e.g. combining balance with coordination tasks), or introducing light competitive elements in a supportive way.
- If equipment is available, it can be used creatively—for example, adding more markers to increase course complexity or incorporating different objects to vary coordination tasks.
- The session structure itself can also be adapted: activities can be shortened, repeated, or spread across multiple shorter sessions. Instructors can also integrate reflective pauses between exercises to allow participants to acknowledge progress and build self-awareness.
- Finally, instructors should remain flexible and responsive to the group's energy and needs on the day, adjusting activities in real time to ensure that all participants feel included, appropriately challenged, and supported in their learning journey.

Expected outcomes

- Increased confidence in basic movement and coordination Participants feel more capable performing fundamental sailing-related movements and tasks. Improved coordination supports smoother, safer participation in onboard activities.

- Reduced anxiety when facing new physical challenges Participants become more willing to try unfamiliar tasks without fear of judgment or failure. A supportive environment helps them manage uncertainty and approach challenges with curiosity.
- Greater engagement and participation in group activities Participants take a more active role in discussions, exercises, and onboard responsibilities.
- Improved trust and communication within the group Participants feel more comfortable expressing needs, asking questions, and giving input. Stronger communication fosters collaboration, mutual support, and a sense of team cohesion.

4.2 Fear-Reduction Tasks on the Boat

This session is designed to equip sailing instructors with the awareness, tools, and practical strategies needed to effectively reduce fear and anxiety among women participants during onboard learning experiences. Fear in sailing is not only linked to physical risk perception but is often influenced by previous experiences, confidence levels, social expectations, and the learning environment created by the instructor. The session emphasizes a gender-responsive coaching approach that prioritizes psychological safety as a foundation for skill development. Through structured, gradual exposure to onboard tasks, the session demonstrates how to break down sailing activities into manageable steps to build confidence incrementally. It also highlights the importance of language, tone, and instructor behavior in shaping participants' perception of control and safety. Ultimately, this session aims to shift the instructor's role from directive expert to supportive facilitator. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to understand common fear triggers among beginner women sailors, apply progressive, low-pressure task design to reduce anxiety, use communication strategies that foster psychological safety, and recognize and respond to emotional cues during onboard activities.

- **Duration:** 60 min
- **Location:** On the boat (preferably in calm and controlled conditions, near marina or sheltered waters)

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors working with adult learners

Materials needed

- Standard sailing boat (stable, beginner-friendly)
- Safety equipment (life jackets, clearly visible and accessible)
- Simple task checklist (optional)

Coaching notes

- Questions for coaches to consider:
 - Am I assuming fear equals lack of competence?
 - Do I unconsciously give more control to confident (often male) participants?
 - Am I minimizing expressed fears instead of validating them?
 - Do I create space for hesitation without pressure or judgment?

- Validate emotions first, instruct second (“It’s normal to feel this way”)
- Avoid performance pressure or comparison within the group
- Use invitational language (“Would you like to try...”) instead of directives
- Observe non-verbal cues (freeze, withdrawal, over-apology)
- Reinforce autonomy and control at every step

Step-by-step

Step 1 - Pre-boarding emotional check-in (10 min). Gather participants in a calm setting and invite them to briefly share how they feel about going on the boat. Normalize fear and uncertainty as common and acceptable responses. Ask open questions: – “What feels exciting today?” – “What feels uncertain or worrying?” Normalize fear as part of learning. Avoid correcting or dismissing concerns.

Step 2 - Safety familiarity & control building (15 min). Before sailing, introduce key safety elements (life jackets, holding points, emergency procedures). Allow participants to physically interact with equipment. Focus on control perception: “You can always...” rather than “Don’t worry.”

Step 3 - Gradual exposure tasks (25 min).

- Task 1: Sitting and feeling boat movement Invite participants to sit in different safe positions and observe the boat’s movement. Encourage simple sensory awareness, such as balance, wind, and sound.
- Task 2: Holding the helm while instructor supervises Introduce simple actions such as holding the helm or adjusting a rope/sheet with close instructor support. Ensure participants feel fully guided and never rushed.
- Task 3: Simple maneuver participation Assist in a simple maneuver by performing one small action (e.g., light steering adjustment or sheet handling) while the instructor gives clear step-by-step guidance and maintains primary control. Gradually increase participation by briefly sharing control during the maneuver, focusing on following instructions in real time without responsibility for the overall outcome.

Step 4 - Closing reflection (15 min).

- What changed from start to finish?
- What felt empowering?

- What remains challenging? Highlight progress, not performance.

Variations

- Pair participants for peer support instead of group sharing: Use fixed dyads so individuals can rely on one consistent partner for reassurance, modelling, and shared reflection, reducing performance pressure in larger groups.
- Shorten to 30 minutes by reducing the number of tasks: Focus on fewer core exposure steps with repetition, ensuring quality engagement rather than task quantity.
- Use dockside-only version for highly anxious groups: Keep all activities stationary at the dock, removing sailing demands while still practicing controls and sensory exposure safely.
- Repeat sessions across multiple days for deeper confidence building: Revisit the same tasks gradually to reinforce learning, reduce avoidance, and build familiarity over time.
- Adapt for mixed groups by rotating roles to ensure equal participation: Assign and rotate roles (observer, assistant, active participant) so each person experiences all levels of involvement.

Expected outcomes

- Increased confidence and willingness to engage in sailing tasks: Participants progressively take on small, manageable responsibilities, leading to a greater sense of competence and readiness to actively participate in basic sailing activities.
- Reduced anxiety through gradual exposure and supportive coaching: Step-by-step tasks combined with clear guidance and reassurance help participants regulate fear responses and feel more in control of the experience.
- Improved instructor awareness of gender-sensitive teaching approaches: Instructors develop a better understanding of diverse needs, communication styles, and confidence levels, allowing for more inclusive and responsive teaching practices.
- Stronger sense of safety, trust, and group cohesion: Consistent support, shared experiences, and structured interactions foster mutual trust, psychological safety, and a more connected, collaborative group environment.

4.3 Gradual Exposure to Responsibility and Leadership Roles

This session is designed to progressively introduce female sailors to leadership and responsibility roles in a safe, structured onboard environment. It aims to build confidence, decision-making ability, and mutual trust within the crew through step-by-step task delegation. Special attention is given to psychological safety, self-doubt reduction, and encouraging active voice in group dynamics, enabling participants to feel competent, seen, and valued. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to facilitate progressive leadership exposure on board. Instructors will learn how to assign and rotate micro-roles to build confidence and decision-making skills in all participants, including less assertive individuals, deliver technical feedback that supports learning under pressure. Instructors will practice giving precise, behaviour-focused feedback that improves manoeuvre execution without increasing

performance anxiety, execute and lead a controlled tacking manoeuvre. Instructors will be able to guide participants in leading a full tack sequence, including helm input, sail handling, and coordinated crew communication, and apply structured communication during manoeuvres. Instructors will develop the ability to teach and reinforce clear, standardized commands that improve timing, safety, and coordination during tacking.

- **Duration:** Approx. 60 min
- **Location:** On board

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors facilitating group learning and team-based activities
- Instructors working with adult learners

Materials needed

- Sailing boat

Coaching notes

- Questions for coaches to consider:
 - Do I unconsciously assign more complex or visible roles (e.g., helm) to more confident or experienced participants?
 - Am I interpreting hesitation as lack of ability rather than a normal response to responsibility and evaluation?
 - Do I intervene more quickly when certain participants are leading, limiting their learning opportunity?
 - Am I valuing technical perfection over communication clarity and teamwork?
 - Do I create equal space for all voices during manoeuvre planning and execution?
- More coaching tips:
 - Anchor instruction in the manoeuvre structure (not theory): Frame every teaching point around the tack sequence: initiation → windward phase → sail transition → stabilization. Keep explanations tied to what participants are physically doing in real time to avoid cognitive overload.
 - Use minimal, high-precision intervention: During execution, avoid over-coaching. Step in only for safety-critical moments or clear breakdowns (e.g., late helm input, uncontrolled jib flogging). When you do intervene, use short, actionable cues like “earlier release” or “hold the helm steady.”

- Standardize communication commands early: Enforce consistent phrasing (“Ready about,” “Hard-a-lee”) from the first rotation. Do not allow informal variations, as inconsistent language increases coordination errors under pressure.
- Distribute leadership exposure intentionally: Rotate helm and command roles regardless of perceived ability. Avoid defaulting confident participants into leadership positions repeatedly—this is essential for developing decision-making under uncertainty in quieter learners.
- Debrief on mechanics, not performance: Keep reflection anchored in observable actions: timing, sequencing, and coordination. Redirect subjective comments (“I felt bad”) into technical analysis (“the jib release occurred after the bow crossed the wind”).

Step-by-step

Step 1 - Briefing (5 min). The instructor explains the objective: “everyone will lead a small, controlled task today.” Emphasis is placed on psychological safety and that leadership is about communication, not perfection.

Step 2 - Micro-role assignment (10 min). Each participant is assigned a small leadership role (e.g., use of the winch and handle, feeling the helm, hoist the mainsail, to sheet in, to ease, to head up, to bear away). Roles are intentionally low-risk at first to reduce performance anxiety and build early success experiences.

Step 3 - First rotation – guided leadership (15 min). Each participant leads her micro-task while the instructor observes closely but intervenes minimally. The instructor provides calm, specific, positive reinforcement

Step 4 - The instructor introduces a team manoeuvre. The focus is on safe execution of a coordinated tacking manoeuvre. Key technical points are reviewed especially crew communication protocols

Psychological safety is emphasized: errors in timing or sail trim are treated as data for correction, not performance failure. Quiet participants are actively invited to take command roles. Micro-role Assignment – Tacking System Roles: Each participant is assigned a specific operational role within the tack with a “dry run”

Step 5 - Expanded Manoeuvre Responsibility (10 min). Participants now execute a continuous tack-and-stabilize sequence, adding complexity:

- Helm initiates tack while simultaneously coordinating speed retention
- Trimmer adjusts both headsail and mainsail balance during exit phase
- Foredeck integrates wind shift calls into timing decisions

Instructor reduces input further, intervening only for safety or major inefficiency (e.g., stalled in irons, over-steering past optimal angle). Emphasis is placed on:

- Inter-role communication latency reduction

- Equal participation in command roles to prevent dominance bias

Step 6 - Debrief – Technical and emotional Reflection Group debrief focuses on execution mechanics and communication

Key takeaway: leadership in manoeuvres like tacking is defined by timing accuracy, communication clarity, and coordinated systems thinking under changing wind conditions, not authority alone.

Variations

- This session can be adapted depending on group size, experience level, environmental conditions, and learning objectives.
- For beginner groups or participants with low confidence, the manoeuvre can be simplified by breaking the tack into isolated components. Instead of running a full sequence, instructors can first focus on helm control only, and, in a separate drill, participants can practice headsail handling on land or at the dock to build familiarity with sheet release and trimming mechanics. This allows learners to build competence progressively before integrating all elements.
- For more advanced groups, complexity can be increased by introducing performance constraints. For example, participants can be asked to maintain boat speed through the tack, minimize loss of momentum, or execute a series of continuous tacks (short tacking). Additional variables such as wind shifts, simulated traffic, or time pressure can be introduced to develop decision-making under more realistic sailing conditions.
- If conditions on the water are challenging (strong wind, waves, limited space), the session can be partially relocated to a dockside or classroom setting. In this case, instructors can use a “dry run” method

Expected outcomes

- Improved manoeuvre execution Participants demonstrate more consistent and coordinated tacking sequences with fewer timing errors and smoother sail transitions.
- Increased confidence in leadership roles Participants show greater willingness to take command, give instructions, and make decisions during manoeuvres.
- Clearer and more effective onboard communication Standardized commands are used consistently, resulting in better coordination and reduced confusion during execution.
- More inclusive participation within the crew All participants engage in active roles, with reduced dominance from more assertive individuals and increased contribution from quieter members.

4.4 Cooperation Drills on the Water

This session strengthens cooperative skills and group awareness through structured on-water exercises. It supports instructors in facilitating inclusive, learner-centered experiences that enhance confidence, participation, and shared responsibility, with particular attention to

engagement patterns often observed among women sailors. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to by the end of this session, instructors will be able to: design and deliver on-water drills that prioritise cooperation and shared learning, facilitate inclusive communication that encourages equal participation, adapt coaching strategies to support confidence-building, particularly for women sailors, and promote collaborative decision-making within a crew environment.

- **Duration:** Approx. 60 min
- **Location:** On the boat

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors facilitating group learning and team-based activities
- Instructors working with adult learners

Materials needed

- Sail boat and standard safety equipment

Coaching notes

- Be aware of unconscious bias such as assuming lower confidence or physical ability
- Avoid over-directing; allow space for decision-making
- Ensure equal participation in all roles (helm, trim, navigation)
- Recognize that some women may initially prefer observation before active engagement
- Encourage equal voice: actively invite quieter participants to contribute
- Reinforce effort and communication, not just technical success
- Use open-ended questions rather than giving immediate solutions
- Normalize mistakes as part of learning
- Pay attention to group dynamics—step in if one participant dominates
- Keep tasks short and clearly structured; link communication instructions directly to the physical task at hand.

Step-by-step

Step 1 - Introduction and framing (10 min). Set expectations: the focus is on teamwork, communication, and shared learning—not performance. Clarify that mistakes are part of the process. Outline safety and rotation of roles.

Step 2 - Guided warm-up – Non-verbal coordination (15 min). Crews sail a short, simple course without speaking. This encourages awareness, observation, and non-verbal coordination. → Quick floating reflection: What worked? What felt challenging?

Step 3 - Core drill – Structured role rotation (20 min). Crews sail a marked course. At each mark, roles rotate (helm, sail trim, lookout/observer). Instructors observe and only intervene when necessary. Encourage crews to briefly plan before maneuvers. Focus: equal participation and shared responsibility.

Step 4 - Applied cooperation challenge (10 min). Introduce a simple tactical decision (e.g. wind shift, route choice). Crews must discuss and agree before acting. Focus: inclusive decision-making and communication.

Step 5 - Reflection and consolidation (5 min). Facilitate a short debrief (on water or ashore)

- Who spoke and who listened?
- How were decisions made?
- What helped you feel confident to contribute?

Variations

- Pairing less confident participants together to reduce pressure Placing participants with similar confidence levels can create a more comfortable and supportive environment.
- Allowing optional observation roles before active participation Giving individuals the choice to observe first helps them understand expectations and build confidence. It is a gradual entry that leads to easier engagement.
- Shorten drills for lower energy groups or challenging weather conditions Adapting the length of activities ensures participants stay engaged without becoming overly fatigued or discouraged. Shorter, focused drills can maintain quality and motivation even in less ideal conditions.
- Introduce buddy systems for additional peer support Pairing participants with a “buddy” fosters encouragement, accountability, and collaboration.
- Adapt complexity of tasks based on skill level Modifying tasks to suit different abilities helps ensure everyone is challenged appropriately without feeling overwhelmed.

Expected outcomes

- Increased confidence in active participation on board
- Improved communication and teamwork within crews
- Greater sense of inclusion and psychological safety
- Enhanced ability to make shared decisions in a sailing context

4.5 Addressing Boat Culture: Hierarchy, Control & Alcohol Awareness

This session is designed to critically examine elements of traditional sailing culture—particularly hierarchy, control, and alcohol use—that can unintentionally create barriers for women’s participation, confidence, and sense of safety. While these aspects are often normalized within boating environments, they may reinforce power imbalances, limit learning opportunities, and discourage open communication. The session aims to support instructors in moving from an unexamined acceptance of “how things are done” onboard toward a more intentional, inclusive coaching approach. Importantly, the session emphasizes the instructor’s role in shaping onboard culture. It encourages proactive strategies to foster psychological safety, shared responsibility, and mutual respect. Ultimately, this session supports a shift from control-based instruction toward facilitative, learner-centered coaching that benefits not only women, but all participants. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to: identify how hierarchy and control dynamics manifest on boats, recognize how alcohol culture can affect inclusion and safety, apply strategies to create psychologically safe and inclusive onboard environments, and respond appropriately to challenging or uncomfortable situations.

- **Duration:** 90 min
- **Location:** Classroom or dockside (can be adapted onboard for real-time discussion)

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors facilitating group learning and team-based activities
- Instructors working with adult learners

Materials needed

- Flipchart or whiteboard
- Markers
- Set of 6–8 scenario cards
- Sticky notes (optional)

Coaching notes

- Questions for coaches to consider:
 - Do I unconsciously accept strict hierarchy as “normal” in sailing?
 - Do I minimize the impact of “banter” or alcohol onboard?
 - Do I assume all participants are equally comfortable speaking up?

- Am I aware of power dynamics between instructor and participants?
- More coaching tips:
 - Model the behavior you expect (calm, respectful, inclusive)
 - Avoid reinforcing stereotypes (e.g. assigning roles by gender)
 - Address issues immediately but constructively
 - Encourage participation from quieter individuals
 - Normalize mistakes as part of learning

Step-by-step

Step 1 - Warm-up reflection (10 min). Ask participants: “Think of a time onboard when you felt uncomfortable or excluded. What contributed to that feeling?”

→ Participants reflect individually, then share 1–2 examples voluntarily. Write keywords on board (e.g. shouting, being ignored, jokes, alcohol).

Step 2 - Mini input. Boat culture unpacked (10 min): Facilitator briefly explains:

- Hierarchy: Can silence or intimidate beginners
- Control: Over-directing reduces autonomy and confidence
- Alcohol: Can blur boundaries and affect safety/inclusion

Step 3 - Scenario-based group activity (35 min): Divide into small groups (2–4 people). Give each group a scenario, e.g:

- A skipper dismisses a woman’s input repeatedly
- Some crew members drink alcohol at the end of day but others don’t want to
- A participant is shouted at for making a mistake
- “Jokes” make someone visibly uncomfortable

Task: Groups discuss:

- What is happening here?
- What risks does this create?
- What should the instructor do?

Step 4- Practical strategies (15 min): Facilitator summarizes actionable strategies:

- Set clear expectations (respect, communication, no alcohol rules)
- Rotate roles to reduce hierarchy
- Use inclusive language and tone
- Intervene early in inappropriate situations
- Create space for all voices

Ask: “What is one thing you will change in your practice?”

Step 5 - Closing (20 min): Full-circle round: each participant shares the one commitment they wrote in Step 4. Facilitator closes by linking back to the keywords collected in Step 1 — showing how the session moved from naming the problem to committing to concrete change.

Variations

- Role-play version (more experiential): Instead of discussing scenarios, participants act them out (e.g. skipper–crew interaction, inappropriate comment, alcohol situation). This helps instructors practice real-time responses, body language, and tone. A short debrief should follow each role-play.
- Onboard delivery (situated learning): If run on a boat, facilitators can connect scenarios directly to the physical environment (helm, deck roles, communication under pressure). Participants can reflect while rotating roles to experience hierarchy and control dynamics firsthand.
- Shortened “micro-session” (10–15 min): Focus on one key theme (e.g. hierarchy only). Use a single scenario and a quick group discussion, followed by 2–3 actionable strategies. Suitable during course breaks or pre-sailing briefings.
- Mixed vs. women-only group adaptation: In mixed groups, include perspectives on allyship and managing group dynamics across genders. In women-only groups, allow more space for sharing lived experiences and building confidence strategies.
- Experience-level adaptation: For beginner instructors, focus on clear “do’s and don’ts” and simple intervention strategies. For experienced instructors, encourage critical reflection on ingrained habits and leadership style.

Expected outcomes

- Increased instructor awareness of harmful cultural norms: Instructors can clearly recognize how hierarchy, control, and alcohol influence onboard dynamics. They become more conscious of subtle behaviors that may exclude or discourage women participants.
- More inclusive and supportive onboard environments: Instructors actively create respectful, welcoming spaces where all participants feel comfortable contributing.
- Improved confidence and participation among women sailors: Women feel more empowered to speak up, take roles, and engage in decision-making onboard. Increased confidence leads to better skill development and continued participation in sailing.
- Safer, more respectful learning experiences for all: Clear boundaries and expectations reduce the risk of unsafe or inappropriate behavior. A culture of mutual respect enhances both physical safety and psychological well-being during sessions.

Additional materials for this session (templates, cards, or checklists) are available in the Toolkit Annex.

4.6 Fun and Low-Stress Technical Drills

This session supports instructors in delivering technical sailing skills through engaging, low-pressure activities that foster confidence, enjoyment, and active participation. It aims to shift

the focus from performance and perfection to exploration and gradual improvement, creating a supportive learning environment particularly beneficial for women who may experience self-doubt or performance anxiety in traditional drill-based coaching contexts. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to by the end of this session, instructors will be able to: design technical drills that prioritize enjoyment and experimentation, reduce performance pressure while maintaining skill development, use creative and game-based approaches to reinforce sailing techniques, and adapt drills to different confidence and experience levels.

- **Duration:** 60-75 min
- **Location:** On the water

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors teaching intermediate sailing skills
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors facilitating group learning and team-based activities
- Instructors working with adult learners

Materials needed

- Sailing boats
- Buoys or floating markers
- Whistles or timers (optional)
- Small reward items (optional, e.g. stickers, tokens)

Coaching notes

- Questions for coaches to consider:
 - Do I unintentionally associate “serious learning” only with strict drills?
 - Am I giving equal space for experimentation without judgment?
 - Do I react differently to mistakes based on gender or confidence level?
 - Am I valuing progress and effort over perfection?
- More coaching tips:
 - Keep instructions simple and avoid overloading with technical language
 - Celebrate small wins and visible progress
 - Normalize mistakes as part of the process
 - Use humor and light competition without pressure
 - Observe group dynamics and ensure equal participation

Step-by-step

Step 1 - Introduction (5 min): Explain the goal: improving technical skills through fun, low-pressure exercises. Emphasize that mistakes are part of learning. Read a short framing line before starting: "There's no test here today — we're playing with skills you already have, to see what we discover." Reuse this same framing before each new station, so the tone stays consistent throughout.

Step 2 - Warm-up Game (15 min): Start with a simple, playful task to build comfort and engagement. Some examples:

- Follow the leader – Copy another boat's movements
- Steering slalom – Weave between buoys
- Balance challenge – Keep boat flat as possible
- Silent sailing – No talking, only gestures
- Speed match – Match another boat's speed
- Wind guess – Point to wind direction while sailing
- Freeze game – Stop boat quickly on signal

Step 3 - Technical Drill Rotation (30–40 min). Set up 2–3 short stations focusing on skills such as:

- Tacking and gybing accuracy
- Sail trimming with "target zones"
- Speed control challenges

Frame each as a game, restating the play framing before each one, for example:

- "Hit the buoy gently without stopping" (easier: larger target zone; harder: smaller target or added time pressure)
- "Silent tacking challenge" (easier: one signal allowed; harder: fully silent with a tighter turning radius)
- "Who can keep the boat most balanced?" (easier: calmer point of sail; harder: closer to the wind or in more chop)

Rotate small groups through stations, keeping time short and dynamic. Offer the easier or harder version per group based on confidence — not everyone needs to attempt the same difficulty.

Step 4 - Encourage Experimentation. Prompt sailors to try different techniques without fear of failure. Reinforce curiosity over correctness.

Step 5 - Group Reflection (10 min). Discuss: What felt easier? What has improved? What was fun? Close by linking into a reflection circle (Activity 2.1) immediately after this session, to consolidate what was learned.

Variations

- Drills can be adapted to different group sizes by working in pairs, small teams, or whole-group challenges to encourage collaboration and peer learning.
- Activities may be simplified for beginners (e.g. larger targets, slower pace, guided instructions) or made more complex for advanced sailors (e.g. adding time constraints or combining skills).
- Instructors can shorten drills to fit into regular sessions or use them as energizers between longer exercises.
- Participants can be invited to co-create games, increasing ownership and motivation. Reflection can take place informally on the water or in small groups to suit time and group dynamics.
- Offer easier and more demanding versions of each drill. Pair with a reflection circle (2.1) immediately after, to consolidate learning.

Expected outcomes

- Increased confidence in performing technical skills: Participants feel more comfortable trying and repeating manoeuvres without fear of failure.
- Reduced anxiety around making mistakes: Learners become more open to experimentation and view errors as part of the learning process.
- Greater engagement and enjoyment in learning: Sessions feel more dynamic and motivating
- Improved retention of sailing techniques: Skills are better remembered through active, playful, and experiential practice.

4.7 Decision-Making Activities at the Helm

This session develops confident and effective decision-making at the helm by combining practical sailing scenarios with awareness of psychological patterns often observed in female learners, such as hesitation, risk sensitivity, and self-doubt. It supports instructors in fostering autonomy, reducing over-reliance on validation, and encouraging decisive action through structured, supportive practice. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to by the end of this session, instructors will be able to: facilitate decision-making exercises that build confidence in female sailors, recognize psychological patterns influencing women's decision-making (e.g. hesitation, over-analysis), apply coaching strategies that encourage assertiveness and autonomy at the helm, and create supportive environments that normalize mistakes as part of learning.

- **Duration:** 60/65 min
- **Location:** Sail boat with onland debrief

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors

- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors teaching intermediate sailing skills
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors facilitating group learning and team-based activities
- Instructors working with adult learners
- Instructors working with women returning to sport after a long break

Materials needed

- Sailing boat(s)
- Whistle or timer

Coaching notes

- Questions for coaches to consider:
 - Do I unconsciously intervene quicker when a woman hesitates at the helm?
 - Do I interpret caution as lack of competence rather than a different risk assessment style?
 - Am I giving equal decision-making space to all participants?
 - Do I reward “perfect decisions” more than “confident attempts”?
- More coaching tips:
 - Allow silence—resist the urge to step in too early
 - Reinforce decision-making effort, not just outcome
 - Use neutral language (avoid “you should have...”)
 - Encourage verbalization of thought processes
 - Reframe hesitation as “information processing,” then guide toward action
 - Self-check for the trainer: am I able to step back fully, or am I narrating decisions for the participant at the helm?

Step-by-step

Step 1 - Introduction & framing (5 min): Explain that decision-making is a skill developed through practice, not perfection. Highlight common tendencies in female learners such as overthinking, fear of mistakes, or seeking validation.

Step 2 - Scenario-based helm rotations (40 min): Participants rotate at the helm in short (5–7 min) scenarios. Each sailor must make decisions independently. Examples:

- Sudden wind shift
- Approaching right-of-way situation
- Need to tack or delay
- Simulated “unexpected obstacle”

Rules:

- No immediate instructor correction
- Crew can only respond after skipper's decision
- Instructor observes silently unless safety requires intervention

Step 3 - "Pause & reflect" micro-debriefs (10 min). After each rotation, ask:

- What did you notice?
- What made the decision difficult?
- Did you hesitate? Why?

Focus on internal processes rather than right/wrong answers.

Step 4 - Final challenge round (5 min). Repeat a scenario with encouragement for quicker, more decisive action.

Variations

- The activity can be adapted by starting with land-based simulations using role-play or visual scenario cards before moving on water, helping build confidence progressively.
- Participants may work in pairs initially, sharing decisions to reduce pressure, before transitioning to solo helm responsibility.
- In mixed groups, instructors can compare different decision-making styles to raise awareness without reinforcing stereotypes.
- Scenarios can be simplified in light wind conditions or made more complex with added variables (e.g. traffic, time pressure). Reflection can be done in pairs for more personal sharing.
- Include adaptation options for lower-resource contexts or limited vessel access — e.g. shorter helm turns, rotating through smaller decision points rather than full passages.

Expected outcomes

- Increased confidence in taking command at the helm
- Reduced hesitation and over-analysis in sailing decisions
- Improved ability to act under pressure
- Greater awareness of personal decision-making patterns

Module 5 – Environmental Awareness

5.1 Eco-Observation Tasks During Sailing

This session introduces instructors to simple eco-observation activities that can be integrated into sailing sessions, helping participants become more aware of their natural environment while enhancing engagement and connection to sailing. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to integrate environmental observation into sailing activities, guide participants to actively notice and reflect on their surroundings, and use nature as a learning and engagement tool.

- **Duration:** 30-40 min (can be integrated into a sailing session)
- **Location:** on the boat or in the dock, on the water activity, marina/harbor area

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors facilitating group learning and team-based activities
- Instructors working with adult learners
- Instructors working with women returning to sport after a long break

Materials needed

- no specific materials required
- optional: checklist or observation prompts

Coaching notes

- Encouraging curiosity and observation rather than performance
- Allowing participants time to engage with the environment
- Using open questions instead of giving answers
- Valuing different perspectives and observations
- Connecting sailing experience with the natural environment Option 1
- Use open-ended questions instead of giving explanations immediately
- Encourage curiosity and exploration
- Encourage participants to explain why they would take a certain action
- Avoid correcting immediately — let them think and try
- Connect environmental awareness to practical sailing decisions

Option 1: Step-by-step (Guided Observation)

Step 1 – Introduction (5 min). The instructor explains that sailing is closely connected to nature, and that observing the environment can improve both sailing skills and enjoyment.

Step 2 – Observation Task (15–20 min). During sailing or while on the boat, participants are asked to observe specific elements:

- wind direction and strength;
- water movement and waves;
- sounds (wind, water, surroundings);
- visual elements (clouds, other boats, wildlife, pollution).

The instructor may guide with questions such as: "What do you notice about the wind right now?" or "How does the water look compared to earlier?"

Step 3 – Sharing Observations (10 min). Participants briefly share what they noticed. Encourage different perspectives and avoid correcting answers.

Step 4 – Linking to Sailing (5 min). The instructor connects observations to sailing: how wind affects movement, how awareness improves decision-making, and how observing surroundings increases safety and confidence.

Variations

- Focus on one element only (e.g. wind) for shorter sessions
- Use a simple observation checklist
- Do the activity while stationary if conditions are difficult
- Ask participants to observe silently for a few minutes before sharing
- Repeat the activity at different times to compare observations

Expected outcomes

- Increased awareness of the natural environment during sailing
- Stronger connection between participants and the sailing experience
- Improved observational skills relevant for sailing
- More engaging and mindful participation in sailing sessions

Option 2: Step-by-step (Environmental Challenge)

Step 1 – Introduction (5 min). The instructor explains that participants will complete a short “environment challenge” while sailing.

Step 2 – Assign Challenges (15–20 min). Participants work individually or in pairs. Each pair gets 2–3 mini tasks: Examples:

- Find where the wind is strongest → explain how you know;

- Identify a change in water movement → what does it mean?;
- Spot something human-related (boat, waste, noise) → how does it affect the environment?;
- Predict what will happen next (wind shift, waves).

Step 3 – Action Link (10 min)). Participants apply one observation to action. The instructor asks participants: “Based on what you observed, what would you do?” Examples:

- If the wind is stronger on one side → Where would you steer?
- If waves are increasing → Would you change speed or direction?
- If you notice another boat or obstacle → What would you do?

Step 4 – Quick Group Share (5–10 min). Each group shares: what they noticed; what decision they made. The instructor connects it to

- sailing awareness
- environmental responsibility.

Variations

- Use a simple observation checklist
- turn tasks into a mini challenge or game
- assign different roles (observer / decision-maker)
- give different tasks to each group

Expected outcomes

- increased awareness of the natural environment during sailing
- stronger connection between participants and the sailing experience
- improved observational skills relevant for sailing
- improved ability to link environmental observation to sailing decisions
- increased confidence in making small decisions on the boat

5.2 Integrating Micro-Environmental Actions in Sailing Lessons

This session helps instructors actively integrate simple environmental actions into sailing lessons through task-based activities, encouraging participants to take responsibility and apply eco-friendly behaviours in real time. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to apply simple environmental actions during sailing activities, guide participants to take responsibility for their environment, integrate eco-actions into practical sailing tasks, and encourage active participation in sustainable behaviour.

- **Duration:** 30-40 min
- **Location:** marina/harbor area, on the boat or in the dock, on the water activity,

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors teaching intermediate sailing skills
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors facilitating group learning and team-based activities
- Instructors working with adult learners
- Instructors working with women returning to sport after a long break

Materials needed

- small waste bag/container
- optional: printed task cards

Coaching notes

- Encouraging responsibility without pressure
- Integrating environmental actions into real tasks
- Using positive reinforcement instead of criticism
- Keeping tasks simple and achievable
- Leading by example through instructor behaviour
- Give clear and specific tasks, not general instructions
- Keep the focus on action, not theory
- Encourage participants to suggest solutions themselves
- Avoid criticising behaviour — focus on improvement
- Reinforce small positive actions

Step-by-step

Step 1 – Introduction (5 min). The instructor explains that participants will complete a short “eco-action challenge” during sailing. Emphasise that the goal is to take small, realistic actions — not to be perfect.

Step 2 – Assign Active Tasks (10 min). Participants work individually or in pairs. Each is assigned 1–2 clear tasks: Examples:

- Collect and safely store any visible waste;
- Identify and suggest one way to reduce environmental impact during the session;
- Monitor noise or behaviour and suggest a more eco-friendly alternative;
- Observe surroundings and point out one environmental risk (boats, pollution, wildlife)

Each participant must:; complete the task; be ready to explain what they did.

Step 3 – Perform Tasks During Sailing (15–20 min). Participants actively carry out their tasks while sailing or on the boat. Instructor role:

- remind participants of their tasks;
- ask short questions: “What did you notice?”, “What did you do?”.

Step 4 – Action Sharing (10 min). Participants share:

- what action they took;
- what was easy or difficult;
- what they would repeat next time

Instructor highlights practical behaviours that can become habits.

Variations

- turn it into a small group challenge (“best eco-action”)
- assign different roles (observer, action-taker, reporter)
- use task cards with different difficulty levels
- focus only on one type of action (e.g. waste or behaviour)
- Repeat in multiple sessions to build habits

This session is weather-dependent — only feasible in calm conditions, as it requires a quiet enough setting for conversation. Consider developing a land-based/indoor alternate version for use when on-water delivery isn't possible.

Expected outcomes

- increased active engagement in environmental behaviour
- improved ability to apply eco-actions during sailing
- development of simple, repeatable habits
- stronger sense of responsibility for the environment

5.3 Environmental Decision-Making in Sailing Practice

This session helps instructors actively engage participants in making environmentally responsible decisions during sailing, linking environmental awareness with real-time behaviour and choices on the water. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to recognise situations where environmental decisions are needed, guide participants to make environmentally responsible choices, connect sailing behaviour with environmental impact, and encourage active responsibility during sailing activities.

- **Duration:** 30-40 min
- **Location:** on the boat or in the dock, on the water activity, marina/harbor area

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors teaching intermediate sailing skills
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors facilitating group learning and team-based activities
- Instructors working with adult learners
- Instructors working with women returning to sport after a long break

Materials needed

- optional: scenario cards

Coaching notes

- Encouraging participants to take responsibility for decisions
- Avoiding giving immediate answers — allow thinking
- Connecting actions with environmental impact
- Supporting discussion without judgement
- Reinforcing responsible behaviour positively
- Use real situations whenever possible
- Encourage participants to explain their reasoning
- Avoid presenting one “correct” answer
- Link decisions to practical sailing behaviour
- Keep discussions short and action-focused

Step-by-step

Step 1 – Introduction (5 min). The instructor explains that sailing involves constant decision-making, and some decisions also affect the environment.

Step 2 – Scenario-Based Tasks (10–15 min). Participants are given short, realistic situations (verbally or on cards), for example:

- There is visible waste in the water nearby;
- Another boat is creating strong waves close to you;
- You are approaching a sensitive or crowded area;
- You need to choose between a faster or more environmentally friendly option

Participants (individually or in pairs) must decide:; What would you do?; Why?.

Step 3 – Apply During Sailing (15–20 min). During sailing, the instructor introduces real-time prompts:

- “What would be the most responsible action here?”
- “What should we consider before making this decision?”

Participants suggest actions and, where possible, apply them

Step 4 – Quick Debrief (5–10 min). Group discussion:

- Which decisions were easy or difficult?;
- What influenced your choices?;
- How can this be applied in real sailing practice?.

Variations

- turn scenarios into a group challenge
- assign different roles (decision-maker, observer)
- use only real-time situations instead of prepared ones
- simplify scenarios for beginners
- repeat the activity in different conditions

Expected outcomes

- increased awareness of environmental impact in sailing decisions
- improved ability to make responsible choices on the water
- stronger sense of responsibility during sailing
- better integration of environmental awareness into practice

Module 6 – Running Women-Centred Sailing Programs

6.1 Designing Flexible and Inclusive Women's Sailing Programs

This session helps instructors design sailing programs that are flexible, inclusive, and confidence-building for women. It focuses on reducing barriers to participation, supporting different learning speeds, and creating emotionally and socially safe learning environments that increase retention and long-term engagement. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to:

- identify structural barriers that limit women's participation in sailing programs, design flexible program structures that support different learning speeds and re-entry, integrate inclusion and emotional safety into program design, and make informed decisions about boats, instructors, and group structure to support confidence and retention.

- **Duration:** 75–90 minutes
- **Location:** Classroom or training room (preferred) Optional: marina with observation of real course setup

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors teaching intermediate sailing skills
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors facilitating group learning and team-based activities
- Instructors working with adult learners
- Instructors working with women returning to sport after a long break

Materials needed

- Flipchart / whiteboard
- Sticky notes
- Markers
- Program Design Template (printed per group or participant)
- Pens

Coaching notes

- Specific Potential instructor biases to reflect on:
 - Assuming all beginners learn at the same pace

- Believing technical instruction alone ensures success
 - Underestimating emotional safety as part of learning
 - Interpreting hesitation as lack of interest or motivation
 - Designing programs based on instructor convenience rather than learner needs
 - Overvaluing performance and progression speed over confidence building
- More coaching tips:
 - Keep the focus on program design, not teaching techniques
 - Push participants to justify each decision (boat, instructor, structure)
 - Emphasize inclusion and flexibility as intentional design choices
 - Encourage realistic, implementable solutions
 - Challenge assumptions about “standard” sailing courses

Step-by-step

Participants work in small groups to design a flexible and inclusive beginner sailing program for women. The focus is on real-world decisions that reduce barriers, support confidence, and increase retention.

Step 1 – The facilitator introduces the task:

- “Design a sailing program that beginner women can join, feel comfortable in, and want to return to.”

Step 2 – Each group receives a flipchart and markers and creates a structured program flow:

- ARRIVAL → FIRST CONTACT → ONBOARDING → FIRST SAIL → LEARNING STRUCTURE → CONTINUATION

Step 3 – For each stage, groups must define:

- ENTRY (inclusion): What happens when participants arrive, how they are welcomed, and how anxiety or uncertainty is reduced.
- BOATS (accessibility & confidence): What type of boats are used and why, focusing on stability, simplicity, and confidence-building.
- INSTRUCTOR (inclusive behaviour): How the instructor communicates, supports participants, and responds to mistakes.
- GROUP SETUP (participation): How participants are organised, how roles are assigned and rotated, and how active participation is ensured.
- PROGRESSION (flexibility): How participants move forward, whether repetition is allowed, and how the program prevents participants from feeling “behind”.

Step 4 – Groups visualise their program clearly on flipchart paper.

Step 5 – They present their program briefly, highlighting one key decision that improves flexibility or inclusion. Participants give one concrete example of how they would apply this program in their own sailing context.

Step 6 – The session ends with reflection on how design decisions influence women’s participation, confidence, and retention

Variations

- Use a printed Program Canvas instead of blank flipchart paper
- Add scenario cards (Module 6.1 set) before the design phase to stimulate thinking
- Pre-define one element (e.g. boat type) to save time
- Run the session at a marina using real boats as reference
- Replace group presentations with peer-to-peer feedback in pairs
- Shorten activity by focusing only on entry and progression design

Expected outcomes

- Participants design a complete, flexible and inclusive beginner sailing program for women
- Increased awareness of how structure, not just teaching, affects retention
- Ability to make informed decisions about boats, instructors, and group setup
- Shift toward participant-centered, confidence-based program design

Additional materials for this session (templates, cards, or checklists) are available in the Toolkit Annex.

6.2 Logistics, Safety, and Instructor Behaviour

This session equips instructors with practical tools to manage safety, logistics, and their own behaviour in a structured and professional way that supports effective learning and inclusion. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to plan and deliver clear, structured safety briefings, manage session logistics to reduce uncertainty and stress, demonstrate professional instructor behaviour in diverse groups, and respond appropriately to challenging or unexpected situations.

- **Duration:** 75 minutes
- **Location:** Classroom + dockside (optional onboard practice)

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors teaching intermediate sailing skills
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors facilitating group learning and team-based activities
- Instructors working with adult learners

Materials needed

- Flipchart or whiteboard
- Markers
- Sample safety briefing structure
- Scenario cards

Coaching notes

- Instructors may rely on routine or personal experience instead of structured approaches. There can be overconfidence in communication (“I already explained this”) or underestimation of how instructor behaviour impacts learning and group dynamics.
- Structure everything: don’t rely on improvisation
- Communicate expectations clearly and early
- Observe participants actively, not passively
- Adjust your behaviour to the group, not the other way around
- Stay consistent—your behaviour sets the standard

Step-by-step

Step 1 – Opening (10 min) – Instructor reality check. What you do: Stand in front of the group and ask: 🙌 “Think about your sessions with women in sailing. What are your key responsibilities BEFORE they step on the boat?” Let answers come naturally. You write on flipchart in 3 columns: – Safety – Logistics – Communication & inclusion Your focus as facilitator: If answers are too general, push deeper: 🙌 “What specifically is different when you teach women beginners vs mixed groups?”

Step 2 – Structuring input (10 min) – Instructor control framework. What you do: You organize their answers into a clear structure: Draw 3 phases: – BEFORE (planning, preparation, emotional safety, clarity) – DURING (communication style, inclusion, observation, safety) – AFTER (feedback, confidence building, reflection) Key message you say: 🙌 “When you teach women, structure is what creates confidence.” Not motivation. Not charisma. Structure.

Step 3 – Safety briefing practice (20 min) – Inclusive communication. What you do: Put participants into pairs. Instruction: 🙌 “One of you is instructor, one is beginner woman sailor. Deliver a 2-minute safety briefing.” Important constraint: Ask them to adapt for: – low confidence – first-time experience – fear of mistakes You observe only: – clarity – tone (supportive vs technical) – inclusivity of language After each round: Ask peer feedback: – “Did you feel safe/confident?” – “What made it easier or harder to understand?”

Step 4 – Scenario work (20 min) – Real situations with women crews. What you do: Split into groups (3–4 people) Give scenario cards (your improved ones) Instruction: 🙌 “You are the instructor in a women-focused sailing program. What do you do in this exact moment?” They must answer: – What do you DO? – What do you SAY? – How do you ensure inclusion and

confidence? Your role: Push them away from technical answers: 👉 “How does your response affect her confidence?” 👉 “Who is excluded in this situation if you do nothing?”

Step 5 – Behaviour reflection (10 min) – Impact on women learners. What you do: Bring group together. Ask: 👉 “What instructor behaviours increase confidence in women beginners?” Then: 👉 “What behaviours unintentionally reduce participation?” Guide them to reflect on: – tone (support vs authority) – speed of instruction – space for mistakes – emotional safety Key message you reinforce: 👉 “Women don’t drop out because sailing is hard. They drop out when the environment feels unclear or unsafe.”

Step 6 – Action planning (5 min) – Real change commitment. What you do: Keep it simple and concrete. 👉 “Write 2 changes you will apply next time you run a women-focused session.” Examples: – “I will slow down my briefing and check understanding” – “I will assign roles intentionally, not by assumption” – “I will include structured debrief every session” Optional sharing (2–3 people)

Variations

- Run briefing practice directly on the boat
- Use video recording for feedback
- Focus only on briefing skills in shorter sessions
- Expand scenarios into role-play exercises

Expected outcomes

- More structured and consistent session delivery
- Stronger instructor confidence in managing groups
- Clearer safety communication and fewer misunderstandings
- More professional and intentional instructor behaviour

Additional materials for this session (templates, cards, or checklists) are available in the Toolkit Annex.

6.3 Creating Clear Progression Pathways Beyond Beginner Level

This session helps instructors design clear, motivating and inclusive progression pathways for sailors after the beginner stage. It addresses the common drop-off point after introductory courses and focuses on how to retain learners—especially women—by making the next steps visible, achievable, and meaningful. By the end of this session, instructors will be able to understand common barriers to progression beyond beginner sailing levels Learn how to structure clear, staged development pathways in sailing education Identify ways to increase motivation and retention in mixed and women-only groups Develop practical tools for communicating “next steps” to learners effectively.

- **Duration:** 90–120 minutes
- **Location:** Classroom or briefing room (with optional on-water demonstration examples)

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors teaching intermediate sailing skills
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors facilitating group learning and team-based activities
- Instructors working with adult learners
- Instructors working with women returning to sport after a long break

Materials needed

- Whiteboard or flipchart
- Progression pathway templates (blank and example versions)
- Post-it notes or cards
- Markers
- Sample sailing syllabus from beginner to intermediate level
- Case study examples (drop-out vs. retained learner journeys)

Coaching notes

- Questions for coaches to consider:
 - Am I assuming all learners want to progress in the same way or at the same speed?
 - Do I unintentionally design progression around “performance” rather than confidence and enjoyment?
 - Am I aware of gendered expectations in skill development (e.g., confidence gaps vs. actual ability gaps)?
 - Do I communicate progression clearly or rely on learners to “figure it out”?
 - Do I value emotional readiness (confidence, comfort) as much as technical skill?
- More coaching tips:
 - Emphasise that progression is not only technical—it is also psychological and social
 - Encourage instructors to use simple, visible “next step” messaging with learners
 - Highlight the importance of confidence milestones, not just sailing manoeuvres
 - Avoid overly linear or competitive progression models
 - Reinforce the idea that retention improves when learners feel “I know what’s next”

Step-by-step

Step 1 – Introduction (10 min): Instructor introduces the concept of progression drop-off after beginner level. Group discussion: “Why do sailors stop after their first course?”

Step 2 – Mapping barriers (15 min): Participants brainstorm barriers learners face after beginner level (e.g. lack of clarity, intimidation, cost, unclear goals, lack of confidence). These are written on a board.

Step 3 – Current pathway analysis (15 min): Participants review a typical sailing school progression pathway. In groups, they identify gaps: Where do learners lose direction? Where is motivation not supported?

Step 4 – Design task: ideal progression pathway (30 min): In small groups, instructors design a “learner-friendly progression model” from beginner to intermediate level. They must include:

- Clear milestones (skills + confidence-based)
- Non-competitive progression options
- Visible “next step” descriptions for learners
- Support mechanisms (mentoring, buddy sailing, mixed practice sessions)

Step 5 – Sharing and reflection (20 min): Groups present their pathways. The facilitator highlights strong inclusive design elements.

Step 6 – Transfer to practice (10–20 min): Each participant writes 2 changes they will implement in their own teaching environment to improve progression clarity.

Variations

- Use real learner stories instead of case studies for analysis
- Run the design task as a walk-and-talk exercise outdoors
- Shorten session by skipping group presentations and using gallery walk feedback
- Adapt for on-water version by discussing progression between sailing breaks

Expected outcomes

- Clearer and more learner-centred progression structures designed by instructors
- Increased awareness of dropout points beyond beginner sailing level
- Improved ability to communicate next steps in a motivating way
- Stronger retention strategies for women and adult learners in sailing programs

Additional materials for this session (templates, cards, or checklists) are available in the Toolkit Annex.

6.4 Building Alumni and Mentor Communities

This session helps instructors understand how to keep people engaged in sailing after their course ends. It focuses on creating simple systems that turn learners into returning sailors, active community members, and eventually informal mentors. By the end of this session,

instructors will be able to understand why people drop out after sailing courses Learn simple ways to keep sailors connected after training Identify how to involve experienced sailors in helping others Build basic ideas for alumni and mentoring activities in sailing clubs.

- **Duration:** 60–90 minutes
- **Location:** Classroom or marina (simple discussion setting)

Target group

- Instructors working with beginner women sailors
- Instructors working with mixed groups including women
- Instructors delivering introductory or discovery sailing experiences
- Instructors teaching intermediate sailing skills
- Instructors working in sailing schools or sailing clubs
- Instructors facilitating group learning and team-based activities
- Instructors working with adult learners
- Instructors working with women returning to sport after a long break

Materials needed

- Flipchart or paper
- Markers
- Post-it notes (optional)

Coaching notes

- Questions for coaches to consider:
 - Do I assume learning ends when the course ends?
 - Do I think only “advanced sailors” can help others?
 - Do I actively invite people to come back, or just say goodbye?
- More coaching tips:
 - Keep it simple — alumni systems don’t need to be complex
 - Focus on feeling of belonging, not performance
 - Give people reasons to come back (social + fun + easy entry)
 - Use experienced sailors as helpers, not formal teachers
 - Always create an “open door” back into sailing

Step-by-step

Step 1 – Start discussion (10 min). Ask: “What happens to your students after the course ends?”

Step 2 – Identify the problem (15 min): List reasons why people stop sailing (lack of invitation, no community, no next step, loss of confidence).

Step 3 – Simple solution mapping (20 min): In groups, design 3 simple ways to keep people connected: – return sailing days – social sailing events – beginner + alumni mixed sessions

Step 4 – Mentor idea (15 min): Discuss: “How can experienced sailors help beginners without being instructors?”

Step 5 – Action step (10–20 min): Each instructor writes 2 things they will try in their club or school.

Variations

- Can be run as a dock discussion instead of classroom
- Can include real alumni stories
- Can be shortened to 30 minutes by skipping group work
- Can be combined with a sailing session debrief

Expected outcomes

- Clear understanding of why sailors stop after courses
- At least 2–3 practical ideas for retention in each instructor’s club
- Awareness that alumni can support learning informally
- More focus on community and return pathways in sailing programs

Closing Note

This toolkit is the product of a process that began well before any activity was written down. The transnational survey of 202 women across five countries provided the evidence base for the curriculum; the international training in Ancona tested that curriculum with sailing coaches and instructors from across the partnership; and the local pilot events that followed tested it again, this time with the women the toolkit was ultimately designed to serve. Each stage shaped what came next, and the sessions presented here carry the input of everyone who took part in that process — as trainers, as participants, and in several cases as both.

That process also surfaced more than could be captured in a fixed set of activities. Coaches identified new challenges worth addressing, participants raised barriers the original needs assessment had not fully anticipated, and several partners developed supporting materials — discussion cards, planning templates, checklists — that went beyond what any single session could hold on its own. Where that material exists, it has been collected separately in the accompanying SAILWISE Toolkit Annex, so that instructors can go beyond the core session description when they want to.

This toolkit is not intended as a finished, static resource. Sailing contexts differ significantly across clubs, countries, and instructor experience, and the sessions in this toolkit are designed to be adapted rather than followed rigidly. Instructors using this toolkit are encouraged to treat the variations offered in each session as a starting point, not a limit, and to adjust activities further based on what they observe in their own groups.

The SAILWISE project continues beyond the publication of this toolkit, through further dissemination activities and the wider network the partnership has built across five countries. The consortium's hope is that this toolkit outlives the project itself: that it continues to be used, adapted, and improved by sailing organisations across Europe working to make the sport more accessible to women.

We are grateful to every coach, instructor, and participant who contributed to this toolkit, whether through the international training, a local pilot event, or the survey that shaped it from the beginning.

SAILWISE Toolkit — Annex

Supporting Materials: Templates, Cards, and Checklists

Sailing Women's Initiative for Sport and Empowerment (SAILWISE)
Erasmus+ Sport — Project No. 101183943

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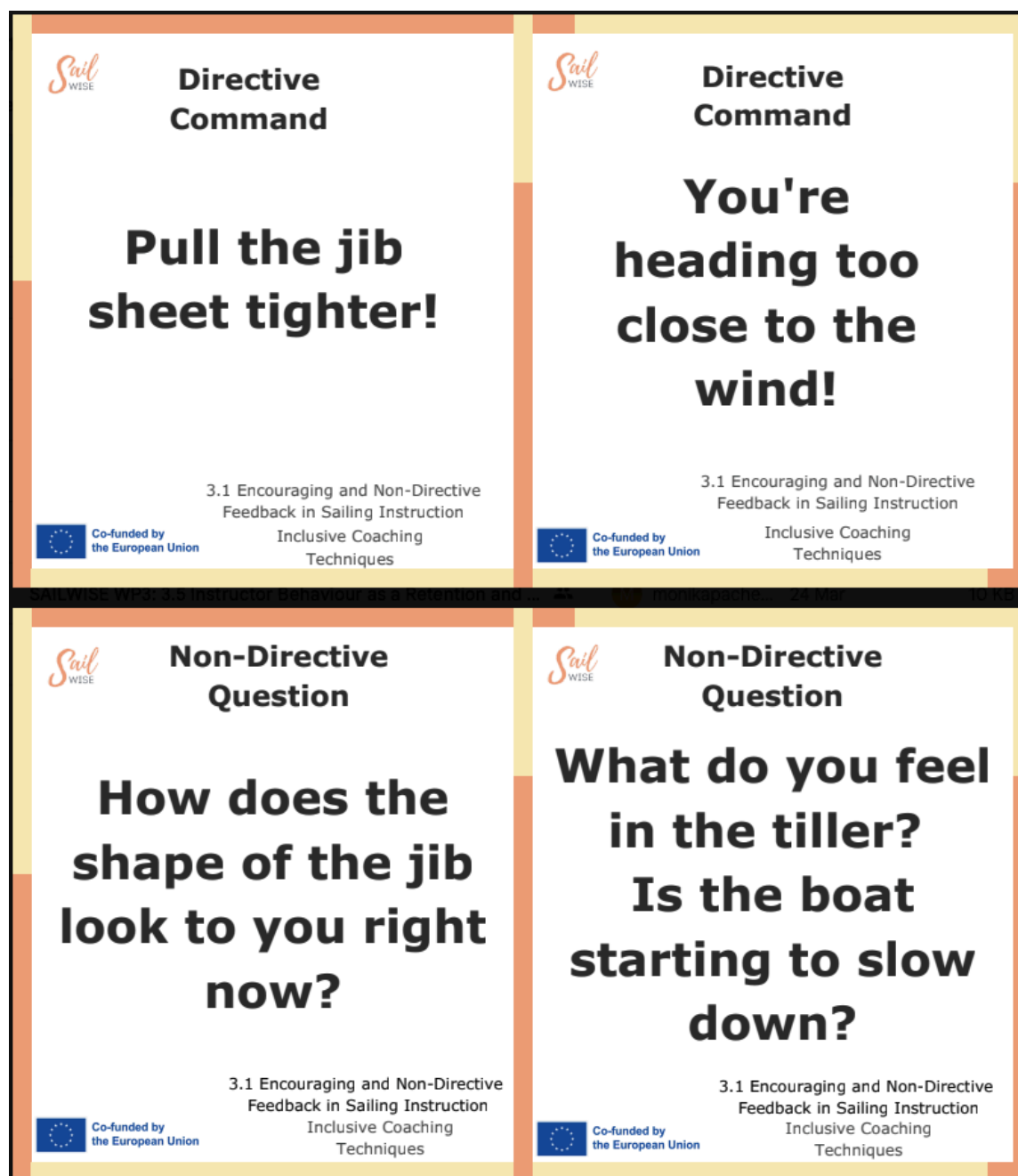
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Module 3 – Inclusive Coaching Techniques

3.1 Encouraging and Non-Directive Feedback in Sailing Instruction

Annex 1 - "Questioning vs. Commanding" Flashcards

These cards help instructors practice the shift in language during high-stress maneuvers.



<i>Sail</i> WISE Directive Command Tie a bowline here. 3.1 Encouraging and Non-Directive Feedback in Sailing Instruction Inclusive Coaching Techniques  Co-funded by the European Union	<i>Sail</i> WISE Directive Command The boat is leaning too much! Let out the mainsheet now! 3.1 Encouraging and Non-Directive Feedback in Sailing Instruction Inclusive Coaching Techniques  Co-funded by the European Union
<i>Sail</i> WISE Non-Directive Question Which knot would be most secure for this loop, and how would you start it? 3.1 Encouraging and Non-Directive Feedback in Sailing Instruction Inclusive Coaching Techniques  Co-funded by the European Union	<i>Sail</i> WISE Non-Directive Question How does the balance of the boat feel to you right now? What could you do with the mainsheet to make us sail flatter? 3.1 Encouraging and Non-Directive Feedback in Sailing Instruction Inclusive Coaching Techniques  Co-funded by the European Union

<i>Sail</i> WISE Directive Command You're going too fast! Put the engine in neutral! 3.1 Encouraging and Non-Directive Feedback in Sailing Instruction Inclusive Coaching Techniques Co-funded by the European Union	<i>Sail</i> WISE Directive Command Your jib is flapping! Pull it in! 3.1 Encouraging and Non-Directive Feedback in Sailing Instruction Inclusive Coaching Techniques Co-funded by the European Union
<i>Sail</i> WISE Non-Directive Question Looking at the pier, what do you think about our current speed? How much power do you feel you need to reach that spot safely? 3.1 Encouraging and Non-Directive Feedback in Sailing Instruction Inclusive Coaching Techniques Co-funded by the European Union	<i>Sail</i> WISE Non-Directive Question Check the telltales on the front sail. What are they telling you about the wind flow right now? 3.1 Encouraging and Non-Directive Feedback in Sailing Instruction Inclusive Coaching Techniques Co-funded by the European Union

<i>Sail</i> WISE Directive Command Look out! There is a boat on our starboard side. Turn left! 3.1 Encouraging and Non-Directive Feedback in Sailing Instruction Inclusive Coaching Techniques  Co-funded by the European Union	<i>Sail</i> WISE Directive Command You're pinching! Head down five degrees 3.1 Encouraging and Non-Directive Feedback in Sailing Instruction Inclusive Coaching Techniques  Co-funded by the European Union
<i>Sail</i> WISE Non-Directive Question Take a scan around the horizon. Is there anything in our path that we need to account for in our next move? 3.1 Encouraging and Non-Directive Feedback in Sailing Instruction Inclusive Coaching Techniques  Co-funded by the European Union	<i>Sail</i> WISE Non-Directive Question Listen to the sound of the water against the hull. Is the boat accelerating or slowing down as you move the tiller? 3.1 Encouraging and Non-Directive Feedback in Sailing Instruction Inclusive Coaching Techniques  Co-funded by the European Union

3.2 Role Rotation: Supporting Women to Try All Roles on the Boat

Annex 1 - Template for the Role Rotation Chart.

This tool is designed to be used by instructors during the "Creating the Rotation Map" task to ensure that every participant systematically moves through all key positions.

SAILWISE Role Rotation Chart Objective: To ensure that no student is relegated to a passive role and that everyone gains hands-on experience at the helm and with technical maneuvers.

1. Rotation Schedule

Instructors should set a timer for 20-minute intervals to maintain momentum.



Rotation Schedule

Time Slot	Helm / Captain	Mainsail / Tactics	Jib / Winches	Bow / Observation
00:00 - 00:20	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D
00:20 - 00:40	Student D	Student A	Student B	Student C
00:40 - 01:00	Student C	Student D	Student A	Student B
01:00 - 01:20	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student A

Annex 2 - Instructor Observation Checklist

Use this during the session to monitor progress and provide non-directive feedback.

Instructor Observation Checklist



Use this during the session to monitor progress and provide non-directive feedback.

- ☐ **Inclusivity Check:** Did every student take the helm, even if they expressed initial fear?
- ☐ **Communication:** Did the new "Captain" use clear, standardized commands?
- ☐ **Empowerment:** Did I stay close during the helm rotation without physically taking control?
- ☐ **Technical Adaptation:** Did students use body weight and technique rather than pure physical strength for winching?

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Annex 3 - Post-Rotation Reflection (Debrief)



Post-Rotation Reflection (Debrief)

At the end of the session, ask the crew:

- Which role felt the most out of your comfort zone?
- How did your perspective change after seeing the boat from the "other side" of the winch?
- What is one skill you want to practice more in your next session?

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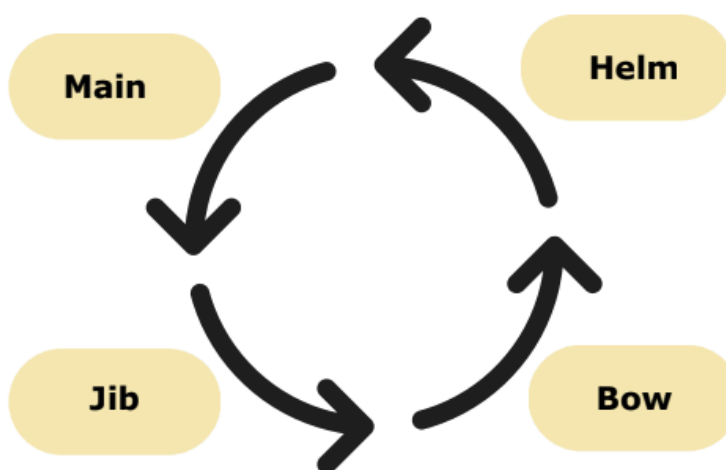
Annex 4 - Role Rotation Visual Map (The "Sailor's Compass")

A circular diagram showing the movement pattern (e.g., clockwise movement: Helm -> Main -> Jib -> Bow).

Purpose: Reduces "role-paralysis" and ensures the transition is smooth and democratic.



Role Rotation Visual Map (The "Sailor's Compass")



3.2 Role Rotation: Supporting Women to Try All Roles on the Boat

3.3 Communication Techniques that Reduce Anxiety and Build Confidence

Annex 1 - Flashcard Set: Communication for Confidence & Safety

These are designed to be used during dockside roleplay to build "muscle memory" for clear, assertive, and stress-reducing communication.

 Card 1: The "Clarification" Script Scenario: The instructor or skipper gives a quick command during a maneuver, but you are unsure which line to pull or what the technical term meant. The Script: • "Skipper, not clear! Please repeat." • "Say again, skipper!" Coach's Tip: Use this to prioritize safety over "appearing experienced." It is better to pause for 3 seconds than to pull the wrong line.  Co-funded by the European Union 3.3 Communication Techniques that Reduce Anxiety and Build Confidence	 Card 2: The "Safety Check" Script Scenario: you see a crewmate about to perform a task (like uncleating a line) that looks incorrect or potentially unsafe. The Script: • "Hang on, let's pause. Is that line secure?" Coach's Tip: Use a non-accusatory tone. Frame it as a collaborative check rather than a criticism.  Co-funded by the European Union 3.3 Communication Techniques that Reduce Anxiety and Build Confidence
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Card 3: The "Support Request" Script

Scenario: You are struggling with a physical task, such as winching in a heavy sail or holding a fender, and you feel your strength or control slipping.

The Script:

- "Can I get a second set of hands on this winch?"
- "I need some help here, please."

Coach's Tip: Clear and direct requests for support reduce anxiety and prevent accidents.



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3.3 Communication Techniques that
Reduce Anxiety and Build Confidence



Card 4: The "Stress Reset" Script

Scenario: Tensions are rising on the boat because a maneuver went wrong, and people are starting to speak over one another or sound frustrated.

The Script:

- "Let's take a break and reset."
- "I need to understand what you meant. Let's talk during the debrief."

Coach's Tip: Use a calm, quiet tone to de-escalate. Acknowledging tension early prevents it from becoming toxic.



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3.3 Communication Techniques that
Reduce Anxiety and Build Confidence



Card 5: The "Closed-Loop" Confirmation

Scenario: You are receiving a standard command (like preparing to tack) and need to ensure the skipper knows you are ready.

The Script:

- Sender: "Ready to tack?"
- Receiver: "Ready!" (Repeat the command to confirm)
- Sender: "Helm to lee." (Execution)

Coach's Tip: This eliminates ambiguity in noisy conditions and ensures the boat only moves when everyone is safe.



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3.3 Communication Techniques that
Reduce Anxiety and Build Confidence



Card 6: The "Situational Awareness"

Scenario: You are at the helm and feel the boat losing speed or notice a change in the wind that the crew might not see yet.

The Script:

- "Boat speed is dropping - trimming main!"
- "Squall approaching from port - prepare to reef."

Coach's Tip: Verbalizing what you see helps the entire crew build a mental map of the environment.



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3.3 Communication Techniques that
Reduce Anxiety and Build Confidence

3.4 Teaching Mixed-Ability Groups in a Supportive Environment

Annex 1 - "Task Layering" Chart

To help instructors implement this, we can have a simple reference card that shows how to break down a common maneuver for different levels.

Example: Tacking a Keelboat

The Beginner Goal: "The Navigator" – Focus on safe movement, staying low, and finding the new seat.

The Intermediate Goal: "The Trimmer" – Focus on the "load" of the sheet and the timing of the release.

The Advanced Goal: "The Tactician" – Focus on looking through the tack to check for traffic and calling the maneuver to the crew.

Annex 2 - "Skill-Level Scenarios"

Cards are designed to help instructors practice "task layering" and differentiation in real-time. This ensures that every woman, from the absolute beginner to the returning sailor, feels empowered and appropriately challenged.

Card 1: The "Newcomer & The Returner"

The Crew: One student who has never stepped on a boat before and one who sailed 15 years ago but has lost her confidence.

The Task: Preparing to leave the dock (Casting off).

Layering Strategy:

The Newcomer: Assigned to "Fender Duty"—learning the names of the secure points and observing the gap between the boat and dock.

The Returner: Assigned to managing the stern line—using her dormant muscle memory to uncleat and coil, giving her an immediate "small win".

Coach's Tip: Use the returner's past experience to help the newcomer with terminology, boosting the returner's leadership confidence.

Card 2: The "Technical Gap" during Tacking

The Crew: Two beginners who are still learning terminology and one intermediate sailor who wants to practice for a skipper license.

The Task: Executing a series of tacks in moderate wind.

Layering Strategy:

Beginners: One focuses on the "Safe Cross" (moving across the cockpit without tripping); the other focuses on the "Lazy Sheet" (releasing the rope on command).

Intermediate: Acts as "Tactician"—checking the horizon for traffic and calling the countdown ("Ready to tack? ... Tacking!").

Coach's Tip: Rotate the beginners into the "Trimmer" role after three successful crosses to keep them progressing.

Card 3: The "Fear Factor" at the Helm

The Crew: A student who is physically strong but terrified of the boat leaning (heeling), and a student who is eager to steer but lacks physical strength.

The Task: Sailing on a close-hauled course.

Layering Strategy:

The Fearful Student: Assigned to the mainsheet—she controls the power. If she feels the boat lean too much, she can "ease" the sail to flatten the boat, giving her back a sense of control.

The Eager Student: At the helm—focusing on "finger-tip" steering and keeping the boat on a straight course toward a landmark.

Coach's Tip: Remind both that mental strength and foresight are more valuable than physical muscle here.

Card 4: Weather & Decision Making

The Crew: A mix of three women with varying levels of comfort regarding a changing sky (dark clouds approaching).

The Task: Risk assessment and navigation back to the marina.

Layering Strategy:

Beginner: "Cloud Watcher"—reporting visual changes in the sky and sea state (ripples vs. waves).

Experienced: "Log Keeper"—checking the barometric pressure or weather app and comparing it to the visual cues.

The Group: A "Supportive Circle" discussion on whether to reef the sails now or continue for 10 more minutes.

Coach's Tip: Validate the beginner's observations as a "strongest safety tool" to build her sense of belonging.

Card 5: The "Silent" Technical Drill

The Crew: A mixed-ability group that has started to rely too much on the instructor shouting instructions.

The Task: Hoisting the mainsail or furling the jib.

Layering Strategy:

The Whole Crew: The task must be completed in total silence.

Experienced Sailor: Leads with non-verbal cues (eye contact and hand gestures).

Beginner: Focuses on "Situational Awareness"—watching the hands of her crewmates to know when to pull or hold.

Coach's Tip: Frame this as an "Awareness Game" to reduce the stress of "getting it wrong".

3.5 Instructor Behaviour as a Retention and Dropout Factor

Annex 1 - Instructor Checklist

This checklist is for instructors to self-evaluate their behavior at the end of each training day.



Instructor Checklist

This checklist is for instructors to self-evaluate their behavior at the end of each training day.

- ☐ The "Wait" Check: Did I give her 3 seconds to notice her own mistake before I spoke?
- ☐ Volume Check: Did I project my voice for clarity, or did I shout out of frustration?
- ☐ Role Check: Did I encourage her to take the helm, or did I unconsciously take it myself when things got tricky?
- ☐ Celebration Check: Did I name at least one specific "win" for every student today?
- ☐ Accessibility Check: Did I use standardized language instead of complex, exclusionary jargon?

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3.5 Instructor Behaviour as a Retention and Dropout Factor

Annex 2 - Case Studies

Instruction Mistakes vs. SAILWISE Solutions Case Study 1: The "Hero Coach"



Instructor Checklist

This checklist is for instructors to self-evaluate their behavior at the end of each training day.

- ☐ The "Wait" Check: Did I give her 3 seconds to notice her own mistake before I spoke?
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3.5 Instructor Behaviour as a Retention and Dropout Factor

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Case Studies: Instruction Mistakes vs. SAILWISE Solutions

Case Study 2: The "Shouting over the Wind" Fallacy



The Scenario: A squall line approaches, and the wind picks up. The instructor begins shouting technical orders rapidly: "Blow the vang! Slack the painter! Harder on the main!" The student, feeling overwhelmed by the noise and the terminology, freezes and lets go of the lines.

The Mistake: Shouting often triggers an anxiety response in learners, especially women who may already be risk-averse in challenging conditions. It shuts down the ability to process new information.

SAILWISE Solution: Use a "firm yet gentle" tone. Implement the Closed-Loop System: give one clear command at a time and wait for a verbal "Ready" or "Done" before moving to the next. Use the "Anchor Breath" technique to reset the crew's focus.

3.5 Instructor Behaviour as a Retention and Dropout Factor

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Case Studies: Instruction Mistakes vs. SAILWISE Solutions

Case Study 3: The "Passive Role" Default



The Scenario: A mixed-ability group is practicing for a local regatta. The instructor assigns the most experienced male student to the helm and the winch, while assigning the female beginners to "watch the telltales" and "move the fenders."

The Mistake: This reinforces the perception that women should contribute minimally to actual sailing. It prevents them from developing the technical skills needed to progress into leadership or professional fleets.

SAILWISE Solution: Implement mandatory Role Rotation. Every student must take a turn at the helm and winches regardless of perceived strength or initial confidence level. Use "Task Layering" to ensure the beginner handles a simplified part of the technical role.

Case Studies: Instruction Mistakes vs. SAILWISE Solutions

Case Study 4: The "Non-Actionable" Feedback



The Scenario: After a rough tack where the boat lost all speed, the instructor says, "That was a mess. You guys need to be faster."

The Mistake: This is critical and vague feedback. It focuses on the negative outcome rather than the technical process, which can lead to shame and self-doubt.

SAILWISE Solution: Use the Situation-Behavior-Impact (SBI) model. Forward-Looking Feedback: "During that tack (Situation), the jib was released too early (Behavior), which caused us to lose our momentum (Impact). Next time, wait for my 'Tacking' call before slacking the line".

3.6 Adapting Coaching to Different Life Stages and Late Entry Sailors

Annex 1 - "Life-Stage Persona" cards

 Card A: The "Busy Professional" Newcomer Profile: Marta (Age 32), a high-achieving corporate manager with zero sailing experience. Primary Motivation: Seeking a "therapeutic escape" to clear her mind of external stressors and improve mental focus. Potential Barriers: Extreme time constraints due to work commitments ; initial apprehension about entering a typically male-dominated technical field. Coaching Strategy: Focus on clear, modular progress that provides a sense of achievement in short windows of time. Use Non-Directive Feedback to allow her to leverage her professional problem-solving and strategic thinking skills on the water.  Co-funded by the European Union 3.6 Adapting Coaching to Different Life Stages and Late Entry Sailors	 Card B: The "Balance-Seeking" Mother Profile: Sofia (Age 38), a woman returning to sport after a long break dedicated to motherhood. Primary Motivation: Finding a balance between professional aspirations, motherhood, and personal growth. Potential Barriers: Low self-confidence and a "negative body image" after years away from physical sport; guilt over prioritizing her own hobbies. Coaching Strategy: Emphasize Emotional Safety and a welcoming environment that inspires a sense of community. Celebrate small technical wins and "Individual Bests" to rebuild her identity as a capable sailor.  Co-funded by the European Union 3.6 Adapting Coaching to Different Life Stages and Late Entry Sailors
 Card C: The "Active Retirement" Transitioner Profile: Elena (Age 45+), a woman transitioning toward retirement and seeking new ways to stay physically and socially active. Primary Motivation: Enhancing physical health, social integration, and preventing the sedentary lifestyle often associated with aging. Potential Barriers: Physical caution or fear of injury; the societal stereotype that sailing is too physically demanding for older women. Coaching Strategy: Focus on technical "smarts" - teaching her to use body weight and mechanical advantage rather than pure upper-body strength. Highlight the Nature Connection and the holistic health merits of sailing to maintain her long-term engagement.  Co-funded by the European Union 3.6 Adapting Coaching to Different Life Stages and Late Entry Sailors	 Card D: The "Confidence-Seeker" Newcomer Profile: Anna (Age 29), a young professional who has never tried water sports. She is successful in her career but feels "out of her depth" in physical, outdoor environments. Primary Motivation: Increasing self-confidence and challenging herself out of her comfort zone. Potential Barriers: Fear of looking "silly" or incompetent in front of others. Coaching Strategy: Use the "3-Second Rule" to allow her to process tasks without immediate correction. Focus on Non-Directive Feedback (e.g., "What do you feel in the tiller?") to help her trust her own instincts.  Co-funded by the European Union 3.6 Adapting Coaching to Different Life Stages and Late Entry Sailors

 Card E: The "Social Integrator" Expat Profile: Elena (Age 34), recently moved to the area for work. She has some recreational sailing experience but no local network. Primary Motivation: Meeting new people and finding a safe, supportive community of like-minded women. Potential Barriers: Lack of access to local sailing clubs and fear of male-dominated social hierarchies on board. Coaching Strategy: Utilize Storytelling and Debriefing sessions to foster personal connection and bonding. Assign her to Cooperation Drills where she must interact closely with other crew members to build immediate trust.  Co-funded by the European Union 3.6 Adapting Coaching to Different Life Stages and Late Entry Sailors	 Card F: The "Technical Transitioner" Profile: Maria (Age 45), an experienced sailor who has spent years as a "passenger" on her partner's boat. She now wants to earn her own skipper license. Primary Motivation: Independence, autonomy, and the desire to lead a crew. Potential Barriers: Gender stereotypes that have previously kept her in "passive" roles; potentially lower upper-body strength compared to male peers. Coaching Strategy: Enforce mandatory Role Rotation, specifically placing her at the helm and in decision-making positions. Teach "Smarter Body Weight" technical skills to handle winches and sails effectively without relying on pure muscle.  Co-funded by the European Union 3.6 Adapting Coaching to Different Life Stages and Late Entry Sailors
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Annex 2 - Handout: Flexibility Best Practices for Women's Sailing

This handout provides concrete strategies for creating a more accessible sailing environment.

1. Scheduling Flexibility

- **Modular Training:** Instead of mandatory full-weekend courses, offer "bite-sized" modules (e.g., 3-hour evening clinics) that fit into a busy professional or family schedule.
- **Drop-in Sessions:** Provide supervised "practice hours" where women can come to the club to practice specific micro-skills (like docking or reefing) without committing to a full course.
- **Rescheduling Policy:** Implement a "family-first" policy that allows participants to make up missed sessions due to unexpected family or work commitments.

2. Financial & Resource Accessibility

- **Tiered Equipment Access:** Encourage women to start with essentials and upgrade gear gradually.
- **Club Gear Libraries:** Provide club-owned, women-specific cut lifejackets and foul weather gear to reduce the initial financial barrier of entering the sport.
- **Second-Hand Networks:** Facilitate "gear swaps" or sales within the community to make high-quality equipment affordable.

3. Social & Inclusive Logistics

- **"Bring a Friend" Days:** Organize informal discovery days where current members can bring a friend in a low-pressure, social environment to reduce the "fear of the unknown".
- **Childcare Solutions:** Partner with local youth organizations or run concurrent kids' "sailing camps" so mothers can sail while their children are safely engaged in activities.
- **Non-Sailing Socials:** Host events like "Storytelling Dinners" or beach yoga to maintain community bonding even when the weather doesn't allow for sailing.

4. Communication & Outreach

- **Low-Stress Digital Channels:** Use WhatsApp or similar platforms for easy, real-time coordination and community support.
- **Language Awareness:** Avoid exclusionary slang and ensure all technical instruction is paired with clear, standardized explanations.

Annex 3 - SAILWISE: Inclusivity & Flexibility Checklist for Sailing Club Managers

This checklist is designed for sailing club managers to evaluate and improve the inclusivity and accessibility of their programs, directly addressing the barriers identified in the SAILWISE project.

1. Program Design & Scheduling

- [] Modular Options: Do we offer "bite-sized" clinics (e.g., 3-hour evening sessions) instead of only full-weekend courses to accommodate busy professional and family lives?
- [] "Bring a Friend" Days: Have we scheduled low-pressure discovery days to reduce the "fear of the unknown" for potential newcomers?
- [] Progressive Pathways: Are there clear steps for women to move from absolute beginners to leading a crew or becoming a skipper?
- [] Make-up Policy: Do we have a flexible policy for participants who miss a session due to unexpected family or work commitments?

2. Logistics & Childcare

- [] Concurrent Activities: Can we coordinate youth sailing camps or shore activities to run at the same time as women's training to solve childcare barriers?
- [] Safety Briefings: Are safety procedures and equipment explained in a way that builds confidence rather than triggering fear?
- [] Comfort Onboard: Do we provide gear in women-specific cuts (PFDs, harnesses, jackets) to ensure mobility and physical safety?

3. Social Environment & Community

- [] Non-Sailing Events: Do we host social gatherings (storytelling dinners, beach yoga, or eco-workshops) to foster a sense of belonging off the water?
- [] Mentorship Access: Have we created opportunities for new sailors to connect with experienced female mentors?

☐ Inclusive Language: Have we audited our communication and instructors to ensure the use of standardized, welcoming language instead of exclusionary jargon?

4. Instructor & Staff Readiness

☐ Mandatory Role Rotation: Are instructors trained to ensure every woman takes the helm and technical roles, regardless of perceived strength?

☐ Non-Directive Feedback: Are our coaches trained to ask "how does it feel?" rather than just commanding "do this"?

☐ Vulnerability Modeling: Are instructors encouraged to share their own mistakes to normalize learning through failure?

5. Digital & Outreach

☐ Representation: Do our marketing materials and social media highlight the achievements and opportunities for women of all ages and backgrounds?

☐ Accessible Resource Hub: Is our website/digital platform updated with project results, toolkits, and success stories for easy self-study?

Module 4 – Practical Activity Toolbox

4.5 Addressing Boat Culture: Hierarchy, Control & Alcohol Awareness

Annex 1 - Scenario Cards



The Skipper always knows best

Scenario: During a beginner sailing session, a woman participant suggests a different way to approach a manoeuvre. The skipper immediately responds: “Don’t worry, just do what I say. I’ve been sailing for 20 years.”

The participant becomes quiet and stops contributing

The Script:

- What is happening here?
- What message might the participant receive?
- How could the instructor encourage learning while still maintaining safety? ...

Coach’s Tip:

Acknowledge the participant’s input

Explain decisions instead of simply giving orders

Invite questions and discussion

Module 4.5 - Addressing Boat Culture



It is «just a joke»

Scenario:

A crew member makes repeated jokes about women being “too cautious” to sail. Some people laugh, but one participant looks uncomfortable and stops speaking.

Discuss:

When can “banter” become exclusionary?
What risks does this create for the learning environment?
How should an instructor respond?

Coach’s Tip:

Address comments early
Set expectations about respectful communication
Check in with participants who may feel excluded

Module 4.5 - Addressing Boat Culture



Alcohol after the session

Scenario:

At the end of a training day, some crew members start drinking alcohol on the boat. They encourage everyone to join, saying:
“This is how sailing culture works.”

Discuss:

- How can alcohol culture affect inclusion and safety?
- Are everyone’s boundaries being respected?
- What expectations should be set?

Coach’s Tip:

- Clarify alcohol policies
- Separate social traditions from training environments
- Make it acceptable for people to opt out

Module 4.5 - Addressing Boat Culture



I will do it – you watch

Scenario:

You are on a sailing lesson. One person in the group has much more experience and always takes control.

When it is time to try a new task, they say:

“Don’t worry, I’ll handle it. It’s faster this way.”

You spend most of the time watching instead of practicing.

Discuss:

What is happening here?

How do you think the less experienced sailors feel?

Who is making decisions?

2. What could be the impact?

How might this affect confidence and learning?

Could someone become less likely to speak up?

Think about: What could improve the situation?

Sharing roles , Encouraging others to try

Supporting each other’s learning

Module 4.5 - Addressing Boat Culture



Who gets heard

Scenario:

You are sailing as part of a mixed-experience crew. During a manoeuvre, you notice something that could be improved and share your idea.

A more experienced sailor immediately responds:

“Don’t worry about that. We know what we’re doing.”

Later, the same person asks the most experienced crew members for their opinions, but ignores suggestions from newer sailors.

Discuss:

What is happening here? Whose opinions are being valued?

How does experience influence who gets listened to?

What could be the impact?

How might this affect someone’s confidence?

Could important information or ideas be missed?

What could the group do? Think about:

Listening to everyone’s input, Respecting different perspectives

Creating a culture where people feel comfortable speaking up

Module 4.5 - Addressing Boat Culture

Module 6 – Running Women-Centred Sailing Programs

6.1 Designing Flexible and Inclusive Women's Sailing Programs

Appendix 1 Program Design Template

Use this to design your sailing program in a simple structured way.

1. PROGRAM BASICS

Program name:

Target group:

(who is this for?)

Group size:

Duration:

2. ENTRY EXPERIENCE

What happens when participants arrive and in the first minutes?

3. BOATS / EQUIPMENT

What boats will you use and why?

4. INSTRUCTOR ROLE

What is the instructor's style and role in this program?

5. GROUP SETUP

How do participants work together on the boat?

6. LEARNING FLOW

How does the program progress from start to finish?

7. EXPERIENCE

What should participants feel during the program?

8. CONTINUATION

What happens after the program ends?

KEY IDEA

What is the most important design decision in your program?

Appendix 2 - Decision Matrix

1. BOAT SELECTION MATRIX

Boat type	Best for	Women beginner suitability	Confidence impact	Risk level	Notes
Small dinghy (light, sensitive)	Advanced beginners	⚠ Low	Low confidence (too reactive)	High	Can create fear due to instability
Stable keelboat	True beginners	✅ High	High confidence building	Low	Best for first experience
Performance keelboat	Mixed/intermediate groups	⚠ Medium	Medium–low (performance pressure)	Medium	Good later progression
Multi-crew learning boat	Social learning groups	✅ High	Very high (shared control)	Low	Best for women-first programs
Catamaran	Fun / discovery sessions	⚠ Medium	High fun, but low control learning	Medium	Good for confidence, not skill depth

✓ Key rule: For beginner women programs → stability > performance every time

2. INSTRUCTOR PROFILE MATRIX

Instructor type	Communication style	Best use case	Impact on women beginners	Risk
Technical expert	Precise, instruction-heavy	Advanced training	Low confidence, high pressure	Overload
Directive leader	Command-based	Emergency / safety situations	Fast action but low learning confidence	Stress
Coaching facilitator	Question-based, supportive	Beginner women programs	High confidence + learning	Low
Social connector	Emotion + group focused	First-time sailing experiences	Very high retention	Low technical depth risk
Mixed-style instructor	Adaptive switching	All-level programs	Balanced outcomes	Depends on skill

✓ Key rule: Women beginner programs need facilitator-style instructors, not command-style instructors

3. GROUP FORMAT MATRIX

Group format	Structure	Best for	Women beginner suitability	Risk
Solo beginners mixed group	Random pairing	General courses	Medium	Comparison pressure
Women-only group	Shared experience	Confidence building	Very high	Low technical competition
Mixed experience group	Beginners + advanced	Clubs	Low–medium	Intimidation risk
Small group (2–4)	Intensive learning	Skill focus	High	Instructor dependency
Crew-based group (5–6+)	Shared boat responsibility	Real sailing simulation	Very high	Requires good facilitation

✓ Key rule: Best structure for women beginners = small + structured + socially safe crew-based learning

4. COMBINED PROGRAM DESIGN LOGIC (THE MOST IMPORTANT PART)

This is how schools should actually decide:

HIGH CONFIDENCE PROGRAM (ideal women beginner setup)

- Boat: stable keelboat or multi-crew learning boat
 - Instructor: coaching facilitator style
 - Group: women-only OR structured mixed small group
 - Result: high retention, high confidence, slower technical progression (but better long-term skill)
-

MIXED OUTCOME PROGRAM

- Boat: performance keelboat
 - Instructor: mixed directive/coaching style
 - Group: mixed experience
 - Result: faster skill learning, but higher drop-out risk
-

HIGH DROP-OUT RISK PROGRAM

- Boat: sensitive dinghies
- Instructor: technical / directive
- Group: mixed beginners with no structure
- Result: confusion, fear, low retention

Module: 6.2 Logistics, Safety, and Instructor Behaviour

Appendix 1 – Scenario Cards

SCENARIO 1: First sail, overload before departure

Category: Safety

It's the first session. A group of beginner women stands on the dock in life jackets. The instructor explains wind, sail trim, boat parts and safety in one continuous explanation for several minutes.

Participants are quiet. No questions. Once on the water, one says:
"I wasn't sure what I was supposed to do when the boat started moving."

Questions:

- What does silence from the group indicate here?
- What information is actually necessary before leaving the dock?
- How would you structure the briefing differently?

✓ Correct – what should realistically be said

"Forget the theory for now — the boat will move, heel, and feel unstable at first, and your only task is to stay seated, hold on, and follow one simple instruction at a time."

Correct:

- Prioritize only essential pre-sailing information:
 - what the boat will feel like
 - what is safe/normal (movement, heel, speed)
 - first action only
- Keep instructions short and practical
- Build understanding through experience on water
- Add detail progressively during sailing

Avoid:

- Explaining full theory before experience
 - Overloading beginners with terminology
 - Treating silence as understanding
-

SCENARIO 2: Participant withdraws after mistake

Category: Instructor Behaviour

During the first maneuver, a participant pulls the wrong rope. The sail flaps loudly and the boat jerks slightly. She immediately steps back and says:

“I’m not doing this right, I’ll just watch.”

Questions:

- What caused the withdrawal more: the mistake or the reaction?
- What is your first response as an instructor?
- How do you re-engage her without pressure?

✓ Correct response

“It’s completely fine — nothing went wrong, just hold this line with me now and try one small movement again together.”

Correct:

- Stop momentary pressure
- Normalize mistake immediately
- Give a very simple next action she can succeed at
- Rebuild confidence through action, not explanation

Avoid:

- Technical correction in emotional moment
- Ignoring withdrawal
- Letting participant disengage

SCENARIO 3: Experienced participant takes over communication

Category: Instructor Behaviour

One participant with sailing experience starts helping others:

“Don’t do it like that, do it this way.”

Other beginners start following her instead of the instructor.

Questions:

- When does peer help become a problem?
- How do you keep instructor authority without conflict?
- How do you use this participant constructively?

✓ Correct response

“It’s completely fine — nothing went wrong, just hold this line with me now and try one small movement again together.”

Correct:

- Acknowledge input briefly
- Re-anchor instructor leadership
- Refocus group instructions
- Optionally assign structured helper role

Avoid:

- Ignoring shift in attention
- Competing with participant
- Allowing parallel instruction

SCENARIO 4: No structure at boarding

Category: Logistics

Participants arrive at the dock at different times. One is putting on a life jacket, another is waiting for instructions, instructor is still preparing equipment.

No clear order is given. Group feels slightly uncertain.

Questions:

- What is the first thing the instructor must establish?
- How do you reduce uncertainty in the first minute?
- What is your “start sequence”?

✓ Correct response

“Stop for a moment — first everyone put on life jackets, stay together here, and wait for my instruction before doing anything else.”

Correct:

- Stop individual actions and gather group attention
- Establish clear sequence:
 1. life jackets
 2. stay together
 3. short briefing
- Take visible control of flow
- Give simple, step-by-step instructions

Avoid:

- Letting participants self-organize
- Starting preparation without group structure
- No clear starting point

SCENARIO 5: Mistake triggers laughter in group

Category: Instructor Behaviour

A participant makes a mistake and the boat reacts slightly. Another participant laughs: “Careful, you’re going to capsize us.”

The instructor hears it but does not respond.

Questions:

- What impact does this have on group safety and confidence?
- Why is this especially important in beginner groups?
- What should the instructor do immediately?

✓ Correct response

“Let’s keep this supportive — mistakes are part of learning, and everyone is still safe and doing well.”

Correct:

- Interrupt behavior calmly
- Reset group tone (“mistakes are part of learning”)
- Reassure participant
- Continue only after safety and tone are restored

Avoid:

- Ignoring comment

- Allowing ridicule
 - Prioritizing task over group atmosphere
-

SCENARIO 6: Too much explanation before sailing

Category: Logistics

Instructor explains wind theory, sail trim, steering, safety rules and boat mechanics in detail before leaving dock.

Participants look passive and stop asking questions.

Questions:

- What is the effect of cognitive overload here?
- What information is actually essential before sailing?
- How should learning be sequenced?

✓ Correct response

“We will learn the details while sailing — for now just focus on what the boat will feel like and your first simple action.”

Correct:

- Teach only:
 - what will happen physically
 - basic safety reality
 - first simple action
- Use experience as primary learning method
- Add theory during and after sailing

Avoid:

- Long theoretical briefings
 - Front-loading all knowledge
 - Assuming beginners can process everything upfront
-

SCENARIO 7: Participant freezes during maneuver

Category: Safety

During a tack, one participant stops reacting, holds the rope tightly, and looks frozen. The boat becomes slightly unstable.

Questions:

- What is your immediate priority?
- How do you stabilize both boat and participant?
- What should you say in this moment?

✓ Correct response

“Stop — I’ve got it — just relax your hands and look at me for the next simple step.

Correct:

- Take control of situation if needed
- Reduce instructions to one clear action
- Remove responsibility from participant temporarily
- Reassure calmly and briefly

Avoid:

- Shouting instructions
- Adding complexity
- Leaving participant under pressure

SCENARIO 8: Instructor over-controls everything

Category: Instructor Behaviour

Instructor continuously gives commands:

“Pull now! No, not that! Faster! Turn!”

Participants become reactive and hesitant.

Questions:

- What does this style do to learning?
- When is directive instruction useful?
- How can you adjust in real time?

✓ Correct response

“Take your time — now just do this one step, and I’ll guide you after that.”

Correct:

- Slow instruction pace
- One instruction at a time
- Add short thinking moments
- Reduce verbal noise

Avoid:

- Constant shouting
- Micromanaging every action
- Eliminating participant decision-making

SCENARIO 9: Unequal participation develops naturally

Category: Instructor Behaviour

After some time, more confident participants take steering and sail handling. Others remain observers without anyone explicitly assigning roles.

Questions:

- Why does this happen in beginner groups?
- What is the risk if it continues?
- How do you correct it early?

✓ Correct response

“Let’s rotate roles now so everyone gets a turn — you will try steering next.”

Correct:

- Assign roles intentionally and rotate them
- Ensure everyone tries key tasks
- Intervene early, not after imbalance settles
- Treat participation as structured learning goal

Avoid:

- Letting roles self-select
- Passive observation by instructor
- Assuming exposure equals learning

SCENARIO 10: No debrief after sailing

Category: Logistics

After docking, instructor says “good job” and starts packing equipment immediately. Group leaves without reflection.

Questions:

- What is lost when there is no debrief?
- What is the minimum effective reflection?
- How does reflection impact learning and confidence?

✓ Correct response

“Before we finish — one quick round: what felt difficult, what improved, and what you take from today?”

Correct:

- 3–5 minute structured debrief
- Ask:
 - what was difficult
 - what improved
 - what they learned
- Reinforce progress and confidence

Avoid:

- Skipping reflection
- Only technical feedback
- No closure of learning experience
- When is directive style useful, and when is it harmful?
- How could this be improved in real time?

SCENARIO 11: Panic spreads through the group

Category: Safety / Instructor Behaviour

During stronger wind conditions, one participant suddenly becomes visibly anxious and says: “I don’t feel safe anymore, I want to stop.”

Another participant immediately reacts:

“Honestly, I also feel nervous now.”

The rest of the group becomes silent and stops focusing on instructions. The boat is still moving and the tension onboard increases quickly.

Questions:

- What is your first priority in this moment?
- How do you prevent emotional escalation spreading through the group?
- What should happen before continuing the activity?
- What type of communication is needed here?

✓ Correct response

“Everyone pause for a moment and stay where you are.”

“You are safe — the boat is stable and under control.”

“We will slow everything down now, one step at a time.”

Correct:

Stabilize emotional state before continuing task

Reduce verbal overload

Use calm, slow and structured communication

Re-establish instructor as the main focus point

Normalize emotional reaction without dramatizing it

Continue only after group attention and emotional stability return

Avoid:

Ignoring emotional escalation

Continuing manoeuvres immediately

Allowing group panic discussions

Talking too fast or giving multiple instructions

Treating fear as weakness or overreaction

SCENARIO 12: Multiple mistakes at the same time

Category: Safety / Cognitive Overload

During a maneuver:

- one participant releases the wrong rope
- another moves unexpectedly across the boat
- another starts asking questions loudly
- one participant freezes completely

The boat becomes temporarily unstable and communication starts breaking down.

Questions:

- What is your first action: instruction or stabilization?
- How do you regain structure under overload?
- What should participants hear first?
- Why is simplicity critical here?

✓ Correct response

“Stop movement — everyone stay where you are.”

“I have control of the boat.”

“One instruction at a time now — focus only on my voice.”

Correct:

Immediately reduce chaos and movement
Re-establish single communication channel
Use short and clear instructions only
Stabilize physical situation before teaching
Slow the pace down intentionally
Prioritize clarity over speed

Avoid:

Correcting everyone individually at once
Giving long explanations during instability
Raising emotional intensity
Allowing multiple people to instruct simultaneously
Continuing task before reset

SCENARIO 13: Emotional shutdown after public correction

Category: Instructor Behaviour / Emotional Safety

During sailing, the instructor corrects one participant sharply in front of the group:
“No, that’s wrong — you’re doing it incorrectly.”

The participant immediately becomes quiet, avoids eye contact, and stops engaging for the rest of the session.

Questions:

- Why can public correction affect participation?
- What is the difference between correction and humiliation?
- How could the instructor repair this situation?
- What type of feedback works better with beginners?

✓ Correct response

“That’s okay — let’s try it together one more time slowly.”

“You are learning, and mistakes are expected here.”

Correct:

Correct behaviour without attacking confidence
Use calm and neutral tone
Separate task from personal judgement
Normalize mistakes as part of learning
Rebuild engagement through support and action
Protect emotional safety in front of the group

Avoid:

Public embarrassment
Frustrated or sarcastic tone
Over-focusing on mistakes
Ignoring withdrawal afterwards
Using authority to create pressure

SCENARIO 14: Dominant participant takes over tasks

Category: Group Dynamics / Inclusion

One confident participant continuously takes ropes, answers questions first, and performs tasks before others have a chance to try.

Other participants become passive observers.

The dominant participant believes she is helping the group progress faster.

Questions:

- Why does this dynamic reduce learning for others?
- When does “helping” become exclusion?
- How should the instructor rebalance participation?
- Why must participation be intentionally structured?

✓ Correct response

“Thank you — now let’s pause and rotate roles.”

“I want everyone to experience this task themselves.”

“You will observe this round, and she will try it now.”

Correct:

Actively structure equal participation

Rotate roles intentionally

Protect learning opportunities for quieter participants

Intervene early before imbalance becomes normal

Use neutral and non-judgmental communication

Avoid:

Allowing natural dominance patterns to continue

Ignoring quieter participants

Framing intervention as punishment

Allowing one participant to become “assistant instructor”

Assuming observation equals learning

SCENARIO 15: Instructor loses authority during stress

Category: Instructor Behaviour / Crisis Communication

During a difficult maneuver, the instructor starts shouting multiple commands rapidly:

“Pull! No, stop! Turn! Faster! Watch the sail!”

Participants hesitate, stop responding clearly, and begin looking at each other instead of the instructor.

Confusion and stress onboard increase rapidly.

Questions:

- What happens when instructor communication becomes chaotic?
- Why does shouting reduce learning and safety?
- How can authority be regained in real time?
- What communication style is more effective under pressure?

✓ Correct response

“Stop for a moment — everyone focus on me.”

“We reset now.”

“One step only: hold your position and wait for the next instruction.”

Correct:

Slow communication pace intentionally
Use one instruction at a time
Reduce verbal noise
Re-establish calm authority
Stabilize attention before continuing task
Create structure before action

Avoid:

Continuous shouting
Stacking multiple instructions together
Communicating emotionally instead of structurally
Rushing participants under pressure
Trying to teach during chaos

6.3 Creating Clear Progression Pathways Beyond Beginner Level

Appendix 1 - Progression Pathways Framework

1 — OBSERVER / ASSISTED PARTICIPANT

What this stage looks like

- follows instructions step by step
- observes crew and skipper actions
- learns basic safety rules

Focus

- feeling safe
- understanding basic boat environment

Moves to next stage when:

- ✓ can complete simple tasks without hesitation

PROGRESSION QUESTIONS:

- Do they feel safe and comfortable on the boat?
- Can they follow 2–3 step instructions?
- Do they start asking “why are we doing this?”

2 — ACTIVE CREW (FOUNDATION)

What this stage looks like

- handling ropes
- basic sail tasks
- follows skipper instructions reliably

Focus

- becoming useful on the boat
- learning basic execution

Moves to next stage when:

- ✓ tasks are done reliably without constant correction

PROGRESSION QUESTIONS:

- Can they complete assigned tasks correctly and consistently?
 - Do they understand basic sailing terms and actions?
 - Do they start noticing what others are doing on the boat?
-

3 — ENGAGED CREW (SITUATIONAL UNDERSTANDING)

What this stage looks like

- anticipates maneuvers
- understands sequence of actions
- supports crew flow without being asked

Focus

- awareness of the whole boat

Moves to next stage when:

- ✓ starts predicting what will happen next on the boat

PROGRESSION QUESTIONS:

- Do they anticipate what the skipper will do next?
 - Can they explain why a maneuver is happening?
 - Do they act without being directly instructed?
-

4 — ADVANCED CREW / CREW MANAGER

What this stage looks like

- supports coordination of maneuvers
- adjusts sail handling independently
- understands skipper decision-making logic

Focus

- high responsibility within crew role

Moves to next stage when:

- ✓ demonstrates understanding of skipper thinking

PROGRESSION QUESTIONS:

- Do they understand WHY decisions are made on the boat?
 - Can they help others on the crew without being asked?
 - Do they stay calm when conditions change?
-

5 — SKIPPER ENTRY (ONLY AFTER CREW BASE)

What this stage looks like

- basic steering responsibility
- simple decision-making
- still actively crew-aware

Focus

- first leadership exposure

Moves to next stage when:

- ✓ can safely coordinate boat + crew in simple conditions

PROGRESSION QUESTIONS:

- Do they understand crew workload and timing?
 - Can they make simple decisions without panic?
 - Do they consider crew actions when steering?
-

6 — DEVELOPING SKIPPER

What this stage looks like

- plans maneuvers
- coordinates crew actions
- manages risk in changing conditions

Focus

- leadership + awareness integration

Moves to next stage when:

- ✓ can lead sailing sessions with minimal instructor input

PROGRESSION QUESTIONS:

- Can they explain their decisions clearly?
 - Do they adapt when conditions change?
 - Do they coordinate crew effectively under pressure?
-

7 — INDEPENDENT SKIPPER

What this stage looks like

- full responsibility for boat
- leadership under pressure
- adapts to complex conditions

Focus

- autonomy + mastery

PROGRESSION QUESTIONS:

- Can they safely lead a crew in variable conditions?
 - Do they make calm, informed decisions under pressure?
 - Do they support and develop their crew onboard?
-

INTEGRATION RULE (CRITICAL)

👉 Skipper development is ONLY valid when crew competence exists first.

👉 A skipper must understand the boat from the inside (crew experience).

FINAL MESSAGE

Sailing progression is not about becoming a skipper. It is about becoming capable, confident, and aware in your chosen role on the boat.

Appendix 2 – Sailing Journey

STAGE 1 — OBSERVER / ASSISTED PARTICIPANT

- Do I feel safe only when someone guides me step by step? Y/N
- Do I mostly observe what others are doing on the boat? Y/N
- Do I rely heavily on instructions for every action? Y/N

STAGE 2 — ACTIVE CREW (FOUNDATION)

- Can I perform basic tasks when someone tells me what to do? Y/N
- Do I feel useful when following clear instructions? Y/N
- Do I still often not understand why we are doing things? Y/N

STAGE 3 — ENGAGED CREW

- Do I sometimes understand what will happen next on the boat? Y/N
- Can I connect different actions into a bigger picture? Y/N
- Do I start feeling part of the sailing flow instead of just tasks? Y/N

STAGE 4 — CREW MANAGER

- Do I help others without being asked? Y/N
- Can I stay calm when conditions or plans change? Y/N
- Do I understand why sailing decisions are being made? Y/N

STAGE 5 — SKIPPER ENTRY

- Can I make small decisions during sailing? Y/N
- Do I understand how crew timing affects the boat? Y/N
- Do I feel ready to take responsibility in simple situations? Y/N

STAGE 6 — DEVELOPING SKIPPER

- Can I plan and lead simple sailing situations? Y/N
- Do I adapt when conditions or crew change? Y/N
- Can I explain my decisions clearly to others? Y/N

STAGE 7 — INDEPENDENT SKIPPER

- Can I safely lead a boat in different conditions? Y/N
- Do I stay calm and make decisions under pressure? Y/N
- Do I support and develop others while sailing? Y/N