Of course. Designing an activity to help your team identify System 1 work units from a list of daily activities is an excellent way to apply the Viable System Model in a practical, bottom-up manner. Here are several facilitation strategies for a one-hour session with your team of seven, designed for a Microsoft Teams whiteboard environment.

**Objective For the Hour**

To collaboratively group individual value-creating activities into emergent, coherent clusters that could function as autonomous "System 1" work units.

**Preparation (5-10 Minutes Before the Session)**

On your Microsoft Teams whiteboard, ensure the brainstormed activity cards are easily movable. Create a large, clean space on the board and have a "parking lot" section for ideas or questions that are important but outside the scope of this specific activity.

**Facilitation Plan (1-Hour Activity)**

This plan is structured to encourage both individual reflection and collective consensus-building, which is crucial for this type of emergent grouping.

**Part 1: Setting the Stage & Framing the Task (10 Minutes)**

**Goal:** Ensure everyone understands the "why" behind the activity and the key principles of a System 1 unit.

**Facilitator's Script and Actions:**

1. **Welcome and State the Objective (2 mins):**
   * "Thanks for joining, everyone. In our last session, we did a great job brainstorming the core activities that create value for our stakeholders. Today, our goal is to see how these activities naturally cluster together. We're going to use a concept from the Viable System Model to help us."
2. **Introduce "System 1" in Simple Terms (5 mins):**
   * "We'll be looking for 'System 1' work units. Think of a System 1 as a mini-business within our team that can largely run on its own. It has everything it needs to do its primary job from start to finish."
   * **On the whiteboard, create a simple text box with the key characteristics of a System 1 unit:**
     + **It performs a primary function** (e.g., 'conducting data analysis for Project X,' 'managing stakeholder communications').
     + **It is largely autonomous and self-managing.** It doesn't need constant direction for its core tasks.
     + **It has its own 'management' capability,** meaning the people within it can handle their day-to-day operations and problem-solving.
     + **It interacts with its own specific environment** (e.g., a particular dataset, a specific group of stakeholders).
3. **Explain the Activity Steps (3 mins):**
   * "First, we'll take some silent time to individually start grouping the activity cards that you think belong together. Then, we'll discuss these initial groupings as a team, refine them, and finally, we'll try to give each stable group a name that reflects its core purpose."

**Part 2: Silent Affinity Grouping (15 Minutes)**

**Goal:** To allow team members to form initial, unbiased groupings without being influenced by more vocal members of the team (avoiding groupthink).

**Facilitator's Script and Actions:**

1. **Initiate Silent Grouping:**
   * "For the next 15 minutes, I'd like everyone to work silently. Please start dragging and dropping the activity cards into groups that you feel make sense. If you see a group someone else has started that you agree with, you can add to it. If you disagree, you can create a new group. Don't worry about perfection; this is just the first pass. The key is to do this without discussion for now."
2. **Facilitator's Role:**
   * **Observe:** Watch for patterns and natural clusters forming. Notice where there is significant agreement or disagreement (e.g., a card that gets moved back and forth).
   * **Encourage Duplication:** If someone isn't sure where a card goes, they can duplicate it and place it in multiple potential groups. You can resolve these duplicates in the next phase. You can say in the chat: "If a card seems to fit in more than one place, feel free to duplicate it for now."

**Part 3: Group Discussion and Refinement (25 Minutes)**

**Goal:** To have the team collaboratively make sense of the initial groupings, debate the placement of cards, and build a shared understanding.

**Facilitator's Script and Actions:**

1. **Open the Floor for Discussion (5 mins):**
   * "Great, thank you for that focused work. Now, let's talk about what we've created. I'll point to a cluster, and I'd love for the person who started it, or anyone who contributed to it, to explain the logic behind that grouping. What makes these activities a coherent unit?"
2. **Facilitate the "Gallery Walk" (15 mins):**
   * Go through the created groups one by one.
   * **Use probing questions to test the "autonomy" of each group:**
     + "Looking at this group, does it have everything it needs to function, or is it heavily reliant on another group for daily work?"
     + "Who is the 'customer' or 'stakeholder' for the work produced by this specific cluster of activities?"
     + "Could a mini-team focused on these activities manage their own workload and quality?"
     + "What activities are we missing for this group to be truly self-contained?" (These might become new cards).
   * **Address Disagreements and Outliers:**
     + Pay attention to cards that were moved multiple times or that stand alone.
     + "I noticed this card for 'Activity X' was moved a few times. Can we discuss the different perspectives on where it belongs and why?"
3. **Merge and Split Groups (5 mins):**
   * Based on the discussion, encourage the team to make changes.
   * "It sounds like we agree that these two smaller groups are actually part of the same larger process. Does it make sense to merge them?"
   * "This group seems to be doing two very different things. Should we consider splitting it into two more focused System 1s?"

**Part 4: Naming and Defining the Systems (10 Minutes)**

**Goal:** To solidify the identity of each group, making them tangible and easy to refer to in the future.

**Facilitator's Script and Actions:**

1. **Draw and Name the Systems:**
   * "This has been a very productive discussion. We now have several stable groups. Let's formalize them. For each cluster, let's give it a name that clearly defines its primary function or purpose."
   * Use the drawing tools in the whiteboard to circle each final group.
   * Facilitate a quick brainstorm for a name for each circle (e.g., "Stakeholder Reporting Unit," "Raw Data Acquisition & Cleaning," "Internal Peer Review Process"). The name should reflect the value it creates.
2. **Recap and Close:**
   * "Excellent work, everyone. We've taken our individual tasks and started to see them as interconnected, autonomous systems. We have identified X potential System 1 units. We'll use this as a foundation for looking at how these units are managed and coordinated in our next steps with the Viable System Model."

This structure provides a clear path from individual tasks to a shared, systems-level understanding of how your team operates, which is the core purpose of a System 1 analysis.