

All Ears Workshop

This workshop involves a writing/drawing exercise and an active listening performance designed for two people. The following questions will help you prepare for the performance listed below. You can write about them, respond to them through drawing, or contemplate them.

Questions

- When have I felt fully heard, or when have I not felt fully heard?
- When have I fully listened to someone, or not?
- What does listening mean to me?
- What are some stories, ideas, or questions I would like to share when I am performing the role of the speaker?
- What will I do if I run out of things to say?
- What does speaking mean to me?

Directions (Performance Score)

Each person will perform both the role of “listener” and the role of “speaker.” This performance can occur in one or two sessions.

For the listener:

Listen without judgment to whatever your partner needs to vocalize out loud and in-person. Listen without keeping time; this performance can last as long or as short as needed. Moments of silence are a natural part of this experience. Prepare for the performance beforehand by reflecting upon or writing down how you would like to listen. Put away electronic devices during the performance. This session must take place in the flesh, not through cell or web technology. Your partner can determine how you will listen: some listening options include occasionally asking questions, offering words of comfort/understanding, or remaining completely silent, etc. This performance is meant to be a private and confidential experience. You and your partner will not repeat any thoughts, ideas, or sounds expressed during this session (unless they involve doing harm to anyone). At the end of the listening session, you will reflect back to the speaker in a non-critical way what you have witnessed during the performance. Note: Since you are not a trained therapist this will not be a therapy session, but a chance to for your partner to vocalize out loud and in-person thoughts and sounds that need to be heard/witnessed.

For the speaker:

Vocalize whatever you need to (through sounds or speech) out loud and in-person with your partner. Vocalize without keeping time; this performance can last as long or as short as needed. Moments of silence are a natural part of this experience. Prepare for the performance beforehand by reflecting upon or

writing down what you would like to talk about. Put away electronic devices during the performance. This session must take place in the flesh, not through cell or web technology. You can determine how your partner will listen to you: some listening options include occasionally asking questions, offering words of comfort/understanding, or remaining completely silent, etc. This performance is meant to be a private and confidential experience. You and your partner will not repeat any thoughts, ideas, or sounds expressed during this session (unless they involve doing harm to anyone). At the end of the vocalizing session, your partner will reflect back to you in a non-critical way what s/he has witnessed during the performance. Note: Since your partner is not a trained therapist this will not be a therapy session, but a chance to for you to vocalize out loud and in-person thoughts and sounds that need to be heard/witnessed.

Reflection (Writing / Drawing Your Experience)

At the end of each session, you will write and/or draw about your experience. Try and make time for this space of reflection as close to the experience as possible. You can share these reflections with your partner, but this is not mandatory.

References

- Pauline Oliveros
- John Cage
- Yoko Ono
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- Suzanne Lacy
- Allan Kaprow
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- Kaprow, Allan, and Kelley, Jeff, Essays on the Blurring of Art and Everyday Life, University of California Press, 2003
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- Rifkin, Jeremy, The Empathic Civilization: The Race to Global Consciousness in a World in Crisis, London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2009
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- The Center for Council
- Non-violent communication
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