

Embodied Learning Module

Milling

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| Aims <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Provide a lived experience of presence without agenda.2. Provide a lived experience of interpersonal connection.3. Generate a sense of connection, shared humanity and community within the group of participants. |
| Environment <p>Open space with room for all participants to move around freely.</p> |
| Materials <p>None</p> |
| Preparation <p>None</p> |
| Activity Description <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Invite the participants to stand in a circle in the activity space while you introduce the activity.2. Invite the participants to move freely about the activity space. After about 20 seconds, invite awareness of the following aspects of their experience:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. The sensations involved with walking around (e.g. feet on the floor).b. The sense of space and the presence of the other participants.c. Body sensations when passing near another person.d. Thoughts and/or impulses present when passing another person.3. Encounter 1: Bare presence<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Invite the participants to stop in front of the next person they come to and stand in each other's presence. For an odd number of participants, either invite one triple, ask an assistant to participate, or participate yourself.b. Invite awareness to what arises, including body sensations, thoughts and impulses.c. After about 10-20 seconds, invite the participants to acknowledge their partners and continue milling.4. Encounter 2: Eye contact<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. After about 30 seconds of milling, invite the participants to stop in front of someone, preferably a new partner.b. Invite the participants to make eye contact with their partners.c. Invite awareness of the physical sensations when making eye contact with another person, any inner sensations, and thoughts and impulses arising.d. After about 10 seconds, invite the participants to acknowledge their partners and continue milling. |

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5. Encounter 3: Eyes closed, holding hands
 - a. After about 30 seconds of milling, invite the participants to stop in front of someone, preferably a new partner.
 - b. Invite the participants to join hands with their partners and then close their eyes.
 - c. Invite the participants to imagine that, just like them, this person was born to a mother and a father, grew up through childhood, adolescence and young adulthood, and is now standing in front of you.
 - d. Invite awareness of the shared experience and presence together, despite vastly different life experiences and stories.
 - e. After about 10 seconds, invite the participants to open their eyes, acknowledge their partners, and continue milling or return to their seats in the circle.
6. Encounter 4 (optional): Reveal something about yourself
 - a. After about 30 seconds of milling, invite the participants to stop in front of someone, preferably a new partner.
 - b. Invite the participants to take turns revealing one thing about themselves, at any level of vulnerability.
 - c. Once each pair has shared with each other, invite the participants to acknowledge their partners and return to their seats in the circle.

Inquiry Framework

After moving back into seating, use inquiry to harvest the experience of the participants. Use the main points listed below as a reference point for framing the responses to these questions.

1. What was the most impactful part of this activity for you?
2. What did you learn about how you engage other people?
3. Did you notice any particular thoughts or impulses to act in a certain way during any of the encounters?
4. Was there one way of connection that was easier for you than the others?
Harder?
5. What insights do you take away from this activity?

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Main Points

1. Presence without agenda is not common to most people's experience.
2. Increased willingness to risk vulnerability contributes to a greater likelihood of connection.
3. Non-verbal and non-conceptual interactions can produce more intimate and meaningful connection than conversation.
4. (Optional) Revealing something precious about myself and my experience can create connection.