

ENACTING RESILIENCE TOOLKIT

ARTS-BASED ACTIVITIES

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In the context of exposure to significant adversity,
resilience is both the capacity of individuals to navigate their way
to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources
that sustain their well-being,
and their capacity individually and collectively
to negotiate for these resources to be provided
in culturally meaningful ways.

- Michael Ungar -

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Enacting Resilience project directors and staff worked with South Asian community members in the Greater Vancouver Region from 2013 – 2016 via the arts to explore how resilience can be further strengthened and vulnerability to violent extremism minimized. Among many facets, we explored how the community has:

- navigated the twin pulls of homeland and Canadian identity;
- thrived in adversity and constant change; and
- accessed social, cultural and physical resources that contribute to resilience, including a sense of stability, belonging and agency.

The South Asian community on Canada's west coast is strong and vibrant, demonstrating resilience in the face of racism and barriers to integration. Punjabis have migrated to Canada for more than a hundred years, contributing to our country from their rich cultures, while helping to build infrastructure and develop resources. They have created strong communities, maintaining vibrant social rituals and demonstrating strength in the face of difficulty, as they have experienced discrimination.

Over the course of three years, we worked with several groups from the Punjabi community including youth, elders and multi-generational groups. Community leaders and cultural curators were also involved, as well as students from a variety of Lower Mainland institutions. Using the arts, we explored how belonging is experienced, both within Punjabi communities and between these communities and other ethnocultural groups. Our work was based on expressive arts methodologies, which are multimodal and stress sensitivity over artistic skills. With arts-based work we counterpointed dialogue, reflecting on the syntheses of ideas expressed by participants. We were heartened at the dedicated participation of community members over the course of the project.

This toolkit includes arts-based activities from each project phase. Examples of dialogic tools are included as well. Within our overall focus on resilience, wellbeing and preventing extremist allegiances, the following themes emerged:

- identity and intercultural collaboration
- relationships to home and homeland
- responsive leadership across cultures
- intergenerational resilience
- neuroscientific aspects of resilience
- conflict transformation and community wellbeing

RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK

Resilience is the individual and group capacity to rediscover coherence when faced with challenges or adversity. In this project, we explored how Punjabis have maintained and renewed collective and social health in the midst of challenges. Community resilience has been a central focus in the Canadian federal government's strategy to prevent extremism and foster the strength to respond, should violence occur.

Definitions of Resilience

The term "resilience" has grown in popularity, and the study of resilience has originated from five main sources: psychosocial, ecological, disaster relief, military and engineering.¹ Each source views resilience in slightly diverging ways; the term eludes precise definition when viewed from an interdisciplinary perspective.² However, its essence relates to this question: *why do some people, communities, or ecosystems deal with challenges better than others?* This question reveals resilience as "a [potentially] powerful lens through which we can view major issues afresh."³ At the same time, it is important to be precise in using the concept. Its recent popularity has led to the suggestion that "the notion of resilience may be beginning to replace 'sustainability' as the buzzword of political and policy-making rhetoric."⁴

Central to most concepts of resilience is the idea that "resilience involves being able to withstand or overcome adversity and unpleasant events and successfully adapt to change and uncertainty."⁵ It is broadly intended to capture "how something or someone copes with a shock or a disturbance."⁶ Many scholars suggest that the foundation of resilience thinking is even simpler: it is about response to and recognition of change.⁷

Theories of *social resilience* are distinct from natural-sciences theories in two significant ways: 1) theories of social resilience necessarily reflect the human ability to take an active role in preparing for and responding to disturbances; and 2) the culture of those reflecting on resilience plays a powerful role in framing understandings of resilience.

Our Resilience Workshops

Throughout the arts-based workshops, we explored individual and collective understandings of the word, "resilience," as there is no direct translation in the Punjabi language. Some words that participants associated with resilience were: strength, charisma, identity, safety, adversity, diversity, resistance, buoyancy, tolerance, perseverance, experience, exposure, inclusivity, acceptance, persistence, cohesiveness, empowerment, pride, self-respect, interpersonal skills, vulnerability, perspective, and adaptability.

¹ Walker, B. and David Salt. (2012). *Resilience practice: Building capacity to absorb disturbance and maintain function*. Washington: Island Press, page 2.

² Zolli, A. and Ann Marie Healy. (2012). *Resilience: Why things bounce back*. New York: Free Press. Page 6.

³ Ibid, page 16.

⁴ Wilson, Geoff A. (2012). *Community resilience and environmental transitions*. New York: Routledge, page 1.

⁵ McEwen, K. (2011). *Building resilience at work*. Samford Valley: Australian Academic Press, page 2.

⁶ Walker & Salt (2012), page 2.

⁷ Wilson (2012), page 55.

Based on these initial dialogues, we structured our workshop activities to cater to four aspects that the group collectively identified as important to community resilience:

1. **Identity:** Understanding and respecting one's identity, as well as celebrating difference in others' identities.
2. **Community:** Learning from elders about one's culture and collective identity, and celebrating cultural traditions and community strengths.
3. **Leadership:** Fostering community-based leadership to respond to challenges in insightful and productive ways.
4. **Perspective:** Understanding biases and frameworks through which the world is viewed.

The activities in this toolkit are organized along these four trajectories.

PREPARATIONS

Spatial Considerations

Creating an environment that supports safety and mutuality is a key consideration for trainers and practitioners when arranging the physical space prior to a session. Being attentive to these details is important to optimize group dynamics. We recommend trying to find:

- a large room with a common working space that is private, quiet and free of obstructions;
- smaller break-out rooms for focused group work;
- adequate source of light (natural, if possible);
- moveable chairs to make room for interactive activities;
- a clear wall space where participants can post art, questions, emerging themes, reflections and evaluations; and
- access to an outdoor environment to expand the range of possible activities.

Supplies

We recommend having access to flipchart paper or a whiteboard with coloured markers for most activities. We also recommend investing in an “art kit,” including blank 8.5 x 11 (letter-sized) paper, as well as writing and drawing materials like pastels, markers, pens, and pencils.

Building Rapport

Physical space directly influences capacities for and the quality of engagements. Placing chairs or cushions in a circular formation tends to encourage collective participation, as verbal and non-verbal cues are directed toward the centre. A circle also communicates a spirit of inclusivity. Arts modalities that require movement require unobstructed spaces. At the same time, certain spatial configurations may be more appropriate in certain contexts and not in others. Observing communities’ habits of spatial organization offers invaluable insight into communication norms.

Timing

The time recommended for each activity will depend on the composition of the group and the context of the workshop. Sometimes, it may be necessary to completely halt a process mid-stream or shift an approach in response to tensions, surprises or emerging inquiries in the room. Encouraging participants to take responsibility for collaboratively monitoring processes underlines mutual ownership in the process. Acknowledging the collective wisdom in a group also invites a climate of curiosity and creativity.

Group Norms

These activities involve sensitive subject matter that may be difficult or may surface moments of vulnerability for participants. This may lead to open sharing, but it is important not to create coercive or obligatory expectations. To facilitate generative dialogue, involve group members in setting norms including openness to disagreement and conflict while maintaining a respectful environment. These norms should also include clear guidelines about confidentiality.

Participants in one workshop series established the following norms:

- Respect confidentiality (ability to share stories beyond the group, as long as they do not include names or any features that may compromise the anonymity of the storyteller or group member).
- Respect the validity of experiences; everyone has a different truth and lens through which they experience life. Honour their truth.
- If you are uncertain about which terms are the most appropriate, ask or clarify before using them. Additionally, if someone is using a term that you deem to be disrespectful or offensive, politely request that they use an alternate or preferred term.
- Have patience. Don't interrupt each other. Silence is okay too.
- Use "I" instead of "we" when referring to your community or culture. Not everyone has the same experience and may not agree with the generalization.
- Give others the benefit of the doubt; everyone is here with the intention of creating a safe and welcoming space. While people make mistakes, we can approach these mistakes as opportunities for learning and disagreement, rather than through defensive reactions.

Working with sensitive and vulnerable subject matter involves various levels of risk-taking. Setting up parameters where choices can be safely made is the facilitator's responsibility to which participants can be invited to contribute. Remember, perceived detours may be as vital to a process as the destination. Possible strategies to enhance trust and transparency include:

- tracking subtle shifts and emerging insights that may otherwise go unnoticed;
- using large sheets of blank paper on the walls to invite visual "check-ins";
- recording questions in a visible location to track uncertainties and emerging inquiries; and
- naming individual, communal and cultural resources throughout the session(s) to counter experiences of deficit, scarcity, or fear.

The Art of Closing

Be sure to provide enough time and space for closure at the end of each session. Allocating and structuring reflective time after a group experience is essential for synthesizing thoughts. Spaces for reflection can also be offered at interim points throughout a session.

When silence has a chance to settle within a group after a shared experience, insights are often expressed with greater clarity. Silence during art-making processes can be a valuable way to stay 'with' experiences that cannot be solely expressed through language. We have included several guided closure activities as part of this toolkit. In planning closing activities, ask yourself:

- How can reflection tangibly deepen this learning process?
- How can the closing activities I plan help participants acknowledge challenges and breakthroughs, as well as turning points in the process?
- How did arts-based processes deepen insights and knowledge in the group, and how might creativity be invited into the closing activities?

TOOLKIT GUIDE

The arts-based methods in this manual are designed to:

- familiarize participants with tools for responsive community leadership
- provide frameworks for surfacing cultural signs and symbols
- offer new ways to experience and articulate interdependence and interconnectedness with others and the environment
- encourage fluidity and flexibility by inviting somatic, imaginative, and emotional intelligences into conflict prevention across cultural divides
- highlight rituals, metaphors and images that hold significant meanings within and between communities and cultural groups
- introduce opportunities to create beauty and coherence in the midst of shifting dynamics or insecurity
- contribute to understandings of how identity, core beliefs and belonging are key elements of resilience.

The activities are divided into four sections:

1. **Opening** (workshop openers, ice-breakers, and scene-setting)
2. **Framework** (activities to frame initial sessions and develop a context for learning about resilience)
3. **Keys to Resilience** (activities that build individual and group awareness of the roles of various factors in resilience, including identity, community, leadership and perspective)
4. **Closing** (activities for reflection, synthesis, and closure)

Each activity in this toolkit has four elements:

- **Goal:** Sharing the intention of an approach with participants fosters clarity and transparency, and enhances trust.
- **Actions:** Activities draw from multiple ways of knowing and highlight sensory engagement, imagination and reflection.
- **Reflections:** Relevant experiences of the research team, workshop participants, and scholar/practitioners in the field of resilience and social transformation through the arts are included here.
- **Discussion Questions:** These are designed to give prospective facilitators prompts to increase dialogue, enliven curiosity, and inspire further inquiry.

We also list recommendations of the best timing for each activity, as well as a supply checklist when supplies beyond the standard materials mentioned earlier are needed.

Most activities will require a short introduction to the theme associated with the activity, sometimes including a theoretical or research-based presentation (5-10 minutes) to help

participants understand complex concepts or definitions in relatable ways. These should be well prepared ahead of time, with minimal jargon and unidirectional speaking, to keep participants engaged.

All of the arts-based activities featured in this toolkit engage the senses and are designed to foster creativity. Some activities integrate multiple art forms, while others focus on creative dialogue or cross-disciplinary inquiry. Symbols from the following legend denote the kind of activity and which arts-based methods will be used:

- ∞ Dialogue
- ◆ Storytelling
- 📄 Writing/poetry
- ★ Theatre
- 🌀 Movement
- Drawing/sculpting
- 🎵 Music
- Photography

SAMPLE PROGRAMMING

With each activity, we have included possible complementary activities that should precede or follow it, as well as suggestions about the order of particular activities in a multi-session format. Session length and frequency will vary depending on the format of the group and space; we chose to coordinate our sessions in 2.5-hour segments, either biweekly or monthly. Below are two examples of multi-session programming:

Sample Workshop Series A (*Focus on Identity and Affinity Groups*)

Session #1 (Total time = 1 hour 50 minutes)

Opening exercise: Starting Points *(20 minutes)*
 Welcomes and establishment of group norms *(15 minutes)*
 Activity: Word Associations *(15 minutes)*
 Presentation: On Resilience *(10 minutes)*
 Break *(10 minutes)*
 Activity: Resilient Haikus & Honouring the Storyteller *(35 minutes)*
 Closing exercise: Popcorn Words *(5 minutes)*

Session #2 (Total time = 1 hour 45 minutes)

Opening exercise: Walking through Space *(20 minutes)*
 Activity: Clay Metaphors *(20 minutes)*
 Presentation: On Identity *(10 minutes)*
 Break *(10 minutes)*
 Activity: Hot Words *(15 minutes)*
 Presentation: On Stereotypes & Labelling *(10 minutes)*
 Closing exercise: Free-Writing *(20 minutes)*

Session #3 (Total time = 2 hours 15 minutes)

Opening exercise: Offbeat Musical Chairs *(20 minutes)*
 Presentation: Affinity Groups *(10 minutes)*
 Activity: Affinity Groups – part 1: small group activity *(30 minutes)*
 Break *(10 minutes)*
 Activity: Affinity Groups – part 2: presentations to plenary group *(30 minutes)*
 Closing exercise: Creative Reflections *(35 minutes)*

Session #4 (Total time = 2 hours 30 minutes)

Opening exercise: Music Metaphors *(10 minutes)*
 Presentation: Forum Theatre theory and application *(5 minutes)*
 Activity: Affinity Theatre – half of group presentations *(45 minutes)*
 Break *(10 minutes)*
 Activity: Affinity Theatre – other half of group presentations *(45 minutes)*
 Feedback form and final insights *(15 minutes)*
 Closing exercise: Fortunately Unfortunately *(20 minutes)*

Sample Workshop Series B (*Focus on Perspective and Visual Imagery*)

Session #1 (Total time = 2 hours 20 minutes)

Opening exercise: Circle of Names (*10 minutes*)
 Welcomes and establishment of group norms (*15 minutes*)
 Activity: Creating Definitions (*30 minutes*)
 Presentation: On Resilience (*10 minutes*)
 Break (*10 minutes*)
 Activity: Symbols of Resilience (*15 minutes*)
 Activity: Hot Images (*30 minutes*)
 Closing exercise: Free-Writing (*20 minutes*)

Session #2 (Total time = 2 hours 20 minutes)

Opening exercise: Five Gifts (*40 minutes*)
 Presentation: On Perspective & the Media (*10 minutes*)
 Activity: Magazine Scramble (*30 minutes*)
 Break (*10 minutes*)
 Presentation: On the ethics and aesthetic tools of photography (*15 minutes*)
 Activity: Resilient Imagery – prep session (*30 minutes*)
 Closing exercise: Popcorn Words (*5 minutes*)

Session #3 (Total time = 2 hours 5 minutes)

Opening exercise: Silent Connections (*15 minutes*)
 Activity: Resilient Imagery – review session (*1 hour*)
 Break (*10 minutes*)
 Presentation: On the Photo Essay & Storytelling through Imagery (*10 minutes*)
 Activity: Photo Essay – prep session (*15 minutes*)
 Closing exercise: Rituals of Gratitude (*15 minutes*)

Session #4 (Total time = 2 hours 15 minutes)

Opening exercise: Circles & Lines (*30 minutes*)
 Activity: Photo essay – review session, first half of presentations (*30 minutes*)
 Break (*10 minutes*)
 Activity: Photo essay – review session, second half of presentations (*30 minutes*)
 Feedback form and final insights (*15 minutes*)
 Closing exercise: Fortunately Unfortunately (*20 minutes*)

OPENING ACTIVITIES

Starting Points ∞ ☸ ◦ [Est. 20 minutes]

GOAL | To explore what participants bring to a diverse group.

ACTIONS |

1. Place large sheets of blank paper on the wall at various “stations” around the room. Mark each station with a different title (examples of titles could include: Visions, Hopes, Expectations, Dreams, Fears).
2. Place pens, coloured pastels, crayons, or paints under each station. For 10 minutes, invite participants to write their own words, phrases or images under each designated heading.
3. Reconvene in a large group, and ask a volunteer from the group to circle words that appear more than once. Invite members to elaborate. Possible questions include:
 - *What made you say yes to coming to this session?*
 - *What personal/professional capacities do you hope to gain during this time?*
 - *What are the risks that you feel in being here?*
 - *Are there fears that may hinder you? How can the group offer you support?*
 - *In what contexts would you like to integrate your learnings?*

Supply Checklist:

- ☒ Pens
- ☒ Paper
- ☒ Coloured pastels
- ☒ Crayons
- ☒ Paints

Discussion Questions

How can creative modes of inquiry invite transparency in a diverse group?

How can spaces support both individual and collective expression?

How have you been able to cultivate reciprocal trust in the midst of discomfort?

CONTEXT | Clear frameworks are important for creating a context where creative problem-solving can be generated. When these are established from the outset, healthy boundaries create more freedom to think “outside the box.” Participants feel affirmed when they express where they are coming from and where they want to go.

Recommendations | Best as an introduction at an initial session.

Music Metaphors [Est. 10 minutes]

GOAL | To gauge the general energy levels and participants' states at the start of a session, and to invite them into the workshop space.

ACTIONS |

1. Ask each person to give a musical metaphor that describes a quality of presence they are bringing into the room. This may include a musical genre such as country, jazz, classical, folk, rock, easy-listening, a Bollywood soundtrack, etc.
2. Give an example, by explaining your genre of music. ("I feel like low-key folk music, a singer-songwriter.") Do not ask participants to interpret their own or others' metaphors. Leave ambiguity in the room to model spaciousness and non-attachment to one particular state of being.
3. You can encourage participants to add a tempo and volume to enliven the musical metaphor. For example, "I'm bringing fast-paced folk music on low volume with a consistent beat."
4. Go around the circle, sharing each person's chosen genre.
5. After this, ask "What qualities of presence are needed to move from dissonance to resonance?" For example, "We need consistent accompaniment from a range of voices, a polyphonic rhythm to include more diversity, a strong beat to keep the dialogue going," etc.

Discussion Questions

What musical metaphors describe current dynamics in a community?

What actions will assist in maintaining a greater sense of cohesion amidst a range of voices in a community?

CONTEXT | Metaphors open up the possibilities for understanding new connections through the power of imagery. Nuanced understandings surface when literal concepts are explored figuratively. For example, a simple musical metaphor is a way to gauge the energy and mood of participants in a room while respecting privacy. Metaphors also convey multiple kinds of information such as perceptions of agency, feelings and relations with others.

Recommendations | Can be used at the beginning or end of any session to gauge mood and smooth transition.

Circle of Names [Est. 10 minutes]

GOAL | To acknowledge each person and invite focus at the beginning of a session.

Supply Checklist:

- ☒ Soft ball, slightly larger than a baseball (or 2)

ACTIONS |

1. Form a circle with all participants and invite each person to say their name one at a time. Ask one person to throw a ball (preferably soft and slightly larger than a baseball) to another person as they call out their own name. The person who catches the ball immediately throws it to another person while calling out their own name. This continues until all have spoken. To add a layer of complexity, ask participants to throw the ball while calling out the person's name to whom they are throwing the ball.
2. While the ball is being thrown, experiment with imaginative ways to introduce one another beyond names. Alternative introductions could include:
 - A colour or weather pattern that reflects their current mood or emotional state
 - A word or phrase that represents a personal passion
 - A word or gesture that embodies their definition of resilience

Variations: *After all names have been heard, add a second ball. Have participants overlap their voices as balls are thrown simultaneously. More balls can be added to increase the challenge. Instead of a ball, a clapping movement can serve as an embodied cue for calling another name. Another variation involves introducing each person's name with a gesture that represents a particular resilient quality that they have. Everyone responds by saying their name while acting out the gesture together.*

Discussion Questions

How can gestures and voice assist with bridging cultural divides within a diverse group?

How can creative modes of introduction help to build positive group dynamics in the initial stages of group formation?

CONTEXT | An accessible platform for learning names with accompanying gestures helps build group rapport. Introducing informal activities in the initial phase of group formation breaks the ice and heightens the potential for receptivity and attunement to others. Repetition also enhances recognition and memory, and reinforces the importance of being witnessed in the presence of others. Utilizing both verbal and nonverbal modes creates greater possibilities for connection across cultural divides.

Recommendations | Recommended in an initial session.

Walking through Space ☿ [Est. 20 minutes]

GOAL | To learn how physical intelligence informs social and spatial interactions.

ACTIONS |

1. Clear out a space in the room large enough to walk around without obstruction.
2. Ask participants to walk at a normal pace in the room and invite them to create their own pathways between others while being intentional about moving into empty spaces that are emerging. Remind them to keep their eyes open as they navigate to find openings and become aware of their movement patterns in space in relation to others.
3. Invite participants to move clockwise, counter-clockwise, backward, forward, horizontally, etc. Ask them to be attentive to how the movement patterns of others influence their own. Observe the subtle energy (body heat or coolness) of others. Prompts may include:
 - Adapt speed (fast-forward or slow-motion)
 - Play with levels (stay low, stand on your tiptoes)
 - Experiment with direction (go the opposite way you would normally go)
 - Lead with different parts of the body (with your hips, nose, elbow)
4. Lead a group dialogue following the activity. Ask participants to describe the overall movement patterns in the room and have them reflect on how they responded as the qualities of movement shifted in the room. Questions to consider:
 - *Did you conform to the movement patterns or retain your own centre?*
 - *Was it easy or difficult to maintain your own tempo and momentum in relation to others? Did you notice any default responses when others sped up or got in your way?*
 - *Did you have a tendency to move to the periphery or claim space in the centre?*

Discussion Questions

How can participants become more aware of themselves in relation to an environment?

Are there ways to maintain individual integrity when multiple trajectories converge or collide?

What patterns emerge when a group moves together?

CONTEXT | Individual and collective movement patterns that often go unnoticed can be revealed in the subtleties of walking through space. Pedestrian movement offers insights into “given” ways of relating within group dynamics. Working with kinesthetic navigation is useful for understanding how individuals respond to one another in the context of a group. Non-verbal cues are more visible when somatic explorations expose sensory ways of relating. With increased kinesthetic awareness, participants experience the interdependence between intention, action, proprioception and stillness.

Recommendations | Can be used as a warm-up at the beginning of any session. Similar to *Silent Connections* (page 21) and *Circles & Lines* (page 20).

Circles & Lines [Est. 30 minutes]

GOAL | To explore the tensions between differing patterns and modes of communication.

ACTIONS |

1. Divide the group in half. One half walks individually in lines around the room. The other group observes on the side. The directions can be redirected whenever participants like; they just must be in linear trajectories (forward, backward, zigzag, etc.). Tell participants that they are free to pause and start again when they feel it is appropriate.
2. After a few minutes, guide participants to move in circles as well as lines, alternating however they'd like. Also, recommend alternating the tempo in both the lines and circles. Ask participants to observe their responses when intersecting with the opposite mover (a circle intersecting with a line).
3. After another few minutes, ask participants to only move in circles in any tempo, size, or direction.
4. After another few minutes, invite some participants to become observers while others continue moving. Play with this new configuration for another few minutes.
5. Guide a dialogue session after the exercise, to share and reflect on what was observed and experienced in the process.

Discussion Questions

Which recurring patterns or surprising responses arose in the group?

How did the choice of stopping and changing direction influence perceptions of others?

Did moving in circles or lines feel more natural to participants? How might this speak to their approach to tasks and conflict?

CONTEXT | This exercise invites heightened awareness of spatial dexterity, safety and trust. Safety and control can be improved through stopping, pausing, and shifting patterns to minimize collisions. Moving in straight lines allows participants to focus on the relationship between intention, action, and consequence. Moving in circles allows participants to focus on patterns, journey, and process. Participants can shift their perspectives by acting as both movers and observers.

Recommendations | Similar to *Silent Connections* (page 21) and *Walking through Space* (page 19).

Silent Connections ∞ ☸ [Est. 15 minutes]

GOAL | To explore how embodiment influences the quality of communication.

ACTIONS |

1. Invite participants to familiarize themselves with their immediate environment by simply walking through the room at a normal pace, exploring the room with all their senses. What textures do they discover? What can they see from different positions and angles? What new sounds do they notice? Which smells do they notice? Encourage them to move in ways that are unfamiliar.
2. After a few minutes, ask participants to introduce themselves to one another without words or eye contact. Suggest how greetings can be framed solely through physical body language (the feet of one person encounters the feet of another person, knees meet knees, shoulders meet shoulders, etc.). The extent of physical contact will depend on the comfort levels of participants and cultural appropriateness.
3. The last set of non-verbal introductions involves eyes meeting eyes. Encourage participants to hold this connection longer than their usual comfort levels permit. Allow time to find a place of stillness in the gaze with one another.
4. Open up the space for dialogue after this final interaction. Possible questions for the dialogue include:
 - *What were the most challenging points of connection? Where were the greatest moments of ease?*
 - *What initial insights were you able to gain through the embodied gestures and exchanges?*
 - *Which surprises emerged from enlivening your senses as you encountered others?*

Discussion Questions

In what context has non-verbal communication been a generative source of connection?

How can the wisdom from kinesthetic intelligence facilitate more spaciousness? What specific qualities can it offer?

CONTEXT | Kinesthetic impulses are engaged before the intellect can offer explanations, and non-verbal circuits of communication highly influence instinctive responses. The whole body is a pivotal site for multisensory negotiation, and is a host to somatic cues that are constantly asserting key facets of our identities, worldviews and socio-political positions. Working in close proximity with others, it is possible to observe how small and subtle gestures, intonations, and sensations profoundly influence relational patterns. Cultivating mutual respect with others calls for a commitment to stay fully engaged with all senses. Risk accompanies conscious exploration, as body language can reveal new levels of vulnerability. Activities like this need to be used with attention to cultural norms and patterns.

Recommendations | Similar to *Walking through Space* (page 19) and *Circles & Lines* (page 20).

Five Gifts [Est. 40 minutes]

GOAL | To explore how cultural assets can be acknowledged through community rituals.

ACTIONS |

1. Set out a large sheet of paper in the middle of the room on the floor/large table with accompanying art materials (pastels, paints, fabric, etc.). Pass out a small sheet of paper and a pen to each person.
2. On small sheets of paper, ask participants to write five assets/resources/gifts that they will bring to the group. These may be skill sets, artistic capacities, cultural insights, etc. Allow a few minutes for this task.
3. Ask each person to create visual images for these five gifts on a large mural sheet in the centre of the room. Have everyone observe how their images change as they work alongside others. Images can overlap or intersect anywhere on the sheet. Allow 20-30 minutes for this collaborative activity.
4. Allow a few minutes for participants to comment on what they observe in the drawings. Questions to spark this dialogue include:
 - *Which images stand out? Why?*
 - *How do the breadth of gifts complement one another? How do they differ?*
 - *What surprised you most in this collaborative process?*

Supply Checklist:

- ☒ Large sheet of paper for mural
- ☒ Pastels
- ☒ Paints
- ☒ Fabric
- ☒ Glue
- ☒ 8.5 x 11 paper (1 pp)
- ☒ Pens (1 pp)

Discussion Questions

How can images help highlight differences and commonalities amidst linguistic and cultural divides?

What community resources could be further mobilized if expressed through multiple modes?

CONTEXT | Naming resources or gifts can be a catalyst for activating them in new ways. When individuals and communities focus on capacities rather than deficits, potential for creativity and possibility expand. In adverse conditions, familiar patterns of communication may not always be the most effective way to override a scarcity mindset. Fostering a multi-perspective approach to problem-solving is therefore important. Images and symbols literally and metaphorically surface points of connectivity through patterns, angles, shapes, colours and spaces. A multi-sensory approach can assist by accenting individual and collective resources.

ACTIVITIES: FRAMING

Creating Definitions [Est. 30 minutes]

GOAL | To create systems of shared knowledge through collaborative brainstorming.

ACTIONS |

1. Allocate a few minutes for a brainstorming session on words associated with “resilience.” Allocate one person to write down the words as they are verbalized on a flip chart/large sheet of paper. Invite dialogue, noting recurring words, themes and phrases.
2. Divide into sub-groups and ask each group to create definitions for resilience based on the words generated earlier. Suggest integrating at least three words from the flip chart. Allow a few minutes for this task.
3. Then, invite each group to share their definitions with everyone. Visually record these definitions and post them.

Discussion Questions

In what contexts would it be useful to insert new definitions into old paradigms?

Under which conditions do creative brainstorming processes shift group dynamics?

How can a collective brainstorming session help uncover assumptions?

CONTEXT | Creating consensus on the meaning of a word or concept can be a challenging task for a diverse group. “Common” definitions are not monolithic, but are constantly mediated and interpreted through cultural lenses, social contexts, and multiple ways of knowing. Expanding fixed ideas through collaborative brainstorming can expose subtexts of meaning that may be significant contributors in conflict. If we aim to be inclusive, it is vital to acknowledge and welcome the inevitable layers of difference. Protracted conflict begins to shift when perceived “givens” are recognized.

Recommendations | Similar to *Word Associations* (page 24).

Word Associations [∞] [Est. 15 minutes]

GOAL | To learn about differing baselines and preconceived interpretations.

ACTIONS |

1. Ask participants to brainstorm words associated with “resilience” for one minute. This can also be used for other words such as leadership, community, belonging, transformation, etc. Then proceed to step 2, 3 or both.
2. In dyads, designate partner A to say one of the new words from the brainstorming session aloud. Partner B responds with the first word that comes to mind. Partner A then responds with the first word that comes to mind, based on partner B’s word. Ask partners to keep this back-and-forth exchange going without hesitation, trying not to repeat words. Continue this free association word exchange for two minutes.
3. Invite partner A to talk about a designated word without stopping for two minutes. After two minutes, partners switch roles and the listener becomes the speaker. Partner B starts with the last word that partner A finished with. This exchange can go back and forth several times for two-minute time increments.
4. In the larger group, dyads debrief on observations, surprises and overall patterns in the improvised exchanges.

Discussion Questions

How can improvisational modes of inquiry help to facilitate transformation and transparency in a diverse group?

What community spaces support individual and collective expression?

Where are there safe community spaces for active listening?

CONTEXT | Improvising with specific words allows for new points of view and fresh responses. Improvisational activities train the brain to reach for imaginative responses to the unexpected, unfamiliar, and unpredictable. Such experiences provide real-time opportunities to develop the skills in creative thinking and collaboration necessary for complex problem-solving.

Recommendations | Similar to *Creating Definitions* (page 23).

Symbols of Resilience ∞ ◯ [Est. 15 minutes]

GOAL | To identify the personal impact of visual symbols for each participant as it relates to their understandings of resilience.

Supply Checklist:

- ☒ 8.5 x 11 paper (1 pp)
- ☒ Pastels

ACTIONS |

1. Pass out paper and pastels to each participant.
2. Ask participants to draw a symbol or drawing that represents what resilience means to them and have them place the symbol in the middle of the circle. Allow at least five minutes for this process.
3. Invite everyone to quietly reflect on the drawings, including their similarities and differences, and what catches their attention in each drawing.
4. Facilitate a group dialogue, asking for observations about the drawings as a whole. Rather than having each participant share the story of their drawing, ask them to comment on what they notice in others' drawings (shapes, lines, colours, spaces, recurring patterns, etc.). Discussion questions could include:
 - *What do you notice in the symbols? Do you see certain patterns when you see the drawings together?*
 - *What similarities and differences between the images do you notice?*
 - *Which symbols stand out to you? Which ones are you curious about and why?*
5. Later, invite participants to share their own stories one by one – why they chose to draw the symbol they did.

Discussion Questions

What is the function of particular symbols in society?

How do specific symbols bring divided groups together to promote cohesion?

Are there certain symbols that perpetuate conflict on an implicit level?

CONTEXT | Symbols transcend spoken and written language and convey multiple dimensions of a concept. They also create new entry points for dialogue about how values, identities and meaning systems are expressed. Drawing images engages creativity and imagination, and broadens both perception and comprehension. Through symbols, we imagine, act, dream and remember. The divisive or synthesizing nature of symbols can direct attention toward peace or conflict. Symbols also connect us to past histories and traditions, communicate cultural narratives, and offer maps for the future. Understanding diverse symbols can assist us to better assess and understand the resilience of a community.

Resilient Haikus

◆ [Est. 30 minutes]

GOAL | To attempt connection and understanding without cultural cues.

ACTIONS |

1. Divide participants into dyads. Ask each pair to stand back-to-back and take turns telling a personal story of resilience for a few minutes each.
2. The listener's job is to be fully present, listening for words that stand out and have resonance (i.e. stood on the edge, trembled, etc.).
3. After each person has spoken, ask dyads to collaboratively create a haiku using the words that stood out for each of them. (They no longer have to be back-to-back for this, and can write down the haikus.) Give an example of a haiku (5, 7, 5 syllables) to begin the process:

*Fight to the summit
torn by distance and shared fear
change to common ground.*

4. Reconvene altogether and invite each dyad to read their haikus aloud. Then, facilitate a group dialogue:
 - *How did it feel being back-to-back?*
 - *What were some of the similarities and differences in each haiku?*
 - *What was surprising about this activity? What was challenging?*

Tip: Refrain from telling participants beforehand that they will be making haikus. Simply guide them through each step at a time. Otherwise, their attention may shift towards looking for haiku lines, which may distract from present listening.

Supply Checklist:

- ☒ 8.5 x 11 paper (1 per pair)
- ☒ Pens

Discussion Questions

Where do stories of community resilience come from?

How have stories of community resilience shifted over the past 10 years?

Who are the storytellers in your community?

From whom would it be helpful to hear more stories?



CONTEXT | Storytelling creates opportunities to be present with others. Sometimes, eye contact and gestures detract from listening deeply. Cultures where oral traditions are revered tend to have this awareness. Tasking listeners to distill the essence of stories in a Haiku helps them focus on the essentials. New meanings surface when complex social identities, power relations, knowledge systems, memory and emotions are crystallized into a distilled form. The haiku structure underlines how the smallest details in our lives may be significant, and are always situated in larger systems of meaning.

Recommendations | Similar to *Artistic Memories* (page 27) and *Honouring the Storyteller* (page 51).

Artistic Memories [∞] ♦ [Est. 15 minutes]

GOAL | To explore the relationship between memory and narrative.

ACTIONS |

1. Invite participants to spend a few minutes recalling a poignant moment when the arts have contributed to a shift or turning point in their lives.
2. Ask partners to sit back-to-back. Partner A shares their story and partner B listens silently while writing down words that resonate with them. After five minutes partners switch roles.
3. Bring everyone back together. Ask participants in the plenary group to share words that resonated with them. Have them collectively reflect on how these words can serve as resources while building resilience in their communities. Note recurring words/ themes that emerge.

Supply Checklist:

- ☒ 8.5 x 11 paper
- ☒ Pens

Discussion Questions

What roles can memory play in resilience?

How can storytelling help to evoke different facets of memory?

How can narratives from the past contribute to meaning-making in the present?

CONTEXT | The arts contribute to meaning-making in both overt and subtle ways. As they open up spaces for individual and collective engagement, new stories can be excavated from hidden places. Noticing significant turning points in life can highlight qualities of resilience related to the shift.

Recommendations | Similar to *Resilient Haikus* (page 26).

ACTIVITIES: IDENTITY

Hot Words ∞ ♦ [Est. 15 minutes]

GOAL | To notice the discrepancies between cultural stereotypes within and outside communities, and how this affects cultural cohesion.

ACTIONS |

1. Ask the group to brainstorm common words and phrases associated with their community or collective identity. How do these words and phrases connect to their cultural identities?
2. Ask them to note words or phrases that others say about their community. Such questions to ask after the brainstorming session include:
 - *Do participants feel that these are accurate descriptions?*
 - *Are these words or phrases different than the words they chose for themselves? If so, what are the differences?*
 - *Are the words mostly negative or positive?*
 - *Where are the others' words or phrases commonly heard (media, between close friends, within families, outside communities, etc.)?*

Discussion Questions

What are some unique or distinctive facets of community resilience?

How do these differ from individual resilience factors?

What are some feasible and effective methods to promote community resilience?

CONTEXT | Language shapes perceptions of individual and group identities, affecting everyone in a given group and their capacities for resilience. Resilience is not a static concept, but a dynamic, evolving process.

Recommendations | This exercise is a good precursor to *Affinity Theatre* (page 43).

Clay Metaphors ○ [Est. 20 minutes]

GOAL | To explore one's identity in creative ways in order to invite new perspectives.

ACTIONS |

1. Pass around a small ball of clay to each participant. Ask them to warm it up in their hands (especially if it is new) as you are giving instructions.
2. Ask participants to choose one core element of their current identity that they would like to share with the group. Such examples could be: Growth (for a student), physical strength (for an athlete), imagination (for a writer), etc.
3. Ask participants to sculpt a metaphor for their identity with the clay. (For example, growth could be sculpted as a tree.)
4. Invite the group to view each others' pieces and notice what they see in each, as well as the similarities and differences between the sculptures. Afterwards, invite participants to share their own reasons for sculpting their metaphors.

Supply Checklist:

☒ Non-toxic, sulphur-free, non-hardening modeling clay (of many colours). Recommended brand: Van Aken Plastalina. (1 block pp)

Discussion Questions

How do cultural narratives shape core aspects of identity?

What aspects of identity often remain hidden from public view?

What can lead to a fractured sense of identity, and what helps foster coherence?



CONTEXT | Identities are multidimensional, continually evolving as communities shift in response to changing contexts. A strong sense of identity can mitigate negative risk factors and strengthen resilience in challenging circumstances. Complex, multi-faceted identities can be powerfully conveyed through clay-making.

Recommendations | This exercise is a good precursor to *Affinity Groups* (page 30).

Affinity Groups [∞] ◆ [Est. 1 hour]

GOAL | To cultivate curiosity, break down barriers between stereotypes and plural truths, and foster cultural cohesion through collective support.

ACTIONS |

1. In a large group, ask participants to name groups with which they self-identify. (For example, athlete, student, South Asian, etc.). Write these words on the board/flip-chart paper.
2. Read out the list. Ask participants to raise their hand for every group with which they self-identify.
3. Choose the 3-4 affinity groups that have the greatest number of participants. The number of affinity groups chosen will depend on the number of participants; 4-5 people per group works well.
4. Ask each participant to choose an affinity group to join.
5. Ask them to discuss the following three questions in their groups:
 - a) What are we really proud of?
 - b) What do we want people to know about us?
 - c) What do we never want to hear anyone say again?
6. After the small-group discussions, reconvene. Invite each group to present their answers to the three questions.
7. After each presentation, others are invited to ask questions of curiosity. Be sure to set a respectful tone so that the questions are framed with awareness of group members' feelings.

Discussion Questions

What challenges and opportunities arise from distinct affinity groups?

Which community mechanisms encourage an exchange between diverse affinity groups? What are the barriers to additional mechanisms?

Which arts-based processes could foster safe spaces for imaginative collaboration between affinity groups?

CONTEXT | An affinity group is formed around a shared interest, issue, background or common goal to which individuals formally or informally belong. Groups may exist for a particular purpose or a limited time, or they may extend across lifespans. Affinity groups may overlap and resilient communities may share attributes across groups. Each group accents particular cultural and organizational qualities related to resilience.

Recommendations | This exercise is designed to precede *Affinity Theatre* (page 43). *Hot Words* is a helpful precursor to this exercise (page 28).

Cultural Entry Points [∞] ♦ [Est. 20 minutes, depending on number of participants]

GOAL | To explore how narrative facilitates shared understanding.

ACTIONS |

1. Ask each participant to briefly share one of the following:
 - cultural narrative with which they closely identify
 - ritual that influences the rhythms of their life
 - passion that shapes their lives, or
 - time when their core belief system felt challenged
2. Follow-up with questions such as:
 - What is one aspect of your identity that often remains hidden from the public?
 - What historical elements of your cultural identity are you curious about?
 - What aspect of the arts do you most identify with (i.e. music, art, theatre, dance, writing, etc.)? How have these arts accompanied you in times of challenge?

Discussion Questions

Which key narratives shape worldviews?

How can the arts help frame conflict in positive ways?

How can storytelling enhance collective capacities to recognize cultural assets?

CONTEXT | Narratives draw on multiple facets of our identities, creating space to be witnessed and known by others. Cultural meaning systems are shaped and maintained by narratives.

Biographical Stories [Est. 35 minutes]

GOAL | To build capacity for cultural fluency through biographical narratives.

Supply Checklist:

☒ 8.5 x 11 paper (1 pp)

☒ Pens (1 pp)

ACTIONS |

1. Ask participants to think of five significant turning points in their lives, and invite them to come up with a chapter title for each turning point. After the five chapter titles have been chosen, have participants compose a title for their biography that speaks to these chapter titles.
2. Partners share their chapter titles in dyads or small groups. Each participant highlights their themes from each chapter, as if they were presenting their book at a launch.
3. Reconvene to the larger group. Questions may include:
 - *What recurring themes or commonalities did you notice in the chapter titles?*
 - *How are these turning points culturally influenced?*
 - *Why have specific turning points remained memorable?*

Discussion Questions

How can personal narratives help to construct meaning?

Are there certain narratives that are typically excluded or silenced in particular cultures or communities?

How do others' stories inform personal ones?

CONTEXT | Significant life events influence decision-making processes. The format of this exercise highlights connective threads between resilience and significant life events.

Recommendations | This exercise could precede *Stamp-Making* (page 34).

Cultural Values ∞ ◆ ✎ [Est. 20 minutes]

GOAL | To explore the commonalities and differences in cultural values.

ACTIONS |

1. Ask participants to brainstorm a list of cultural values.
2. Ask them to choose one value to explore, write it down and draw a symbol for it.
3. Invite participants to individually move around the room holding their written value. Instruct them to move toward those with aligned values. When they encounter those with values opposite to theirs, ask them to begin moving to opposite sides of the room.
4. Eventually, clumps will begin to form. Have everyone stop once they feel (or the rhythm feels) as though they have found their space in the room.
5. Ask each person to briefly share their value and symbol.
6. Reconvene the group to dialogue about commonalities, differences, themes, and movement patterns that emerged. Tabulate the values.

Supply Checklist:

- ☒ 8.5 x 11 paper (1 pp)
- ☒ Pens (1 pp)
- ☒ Markers, pastels, etc.

Discussion Questions

How do symbols reveal cultural values?

What are some dominant cultural values that shaped particular worldviews?

What qualities can shared values offer in the midst of deep-seated conflict?

CONTEXT | Cultural values form the bedrock of identity. Symbols can help participants notice similarities and differences in relation to others.

Stamp-Making ∞ ◆ ○ [Est. 1 hour 20 minutes]

GOAL | To creatively explore the power of non-verbal symbols in order to convey important moments of collective and individual identity and change.

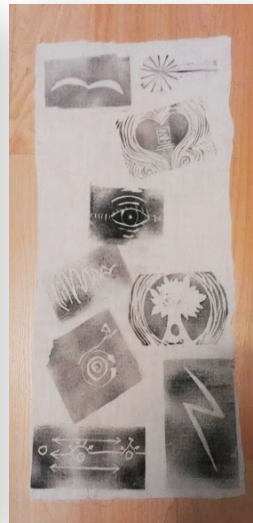
ACTIONS |

1. Give each participant paper and pen on covered tables.
2. Ask participants to remember a time in their lives when they had to adapt or find resilience. Ask them to choose a symbol that relates to this point, and to draw it on a piece of paper.
3. Ask participants to share their symbol with a partner.
4. Give each participant one 2.75 x 4 rubber block. Ask them to re-draw their symbol as simply and carefully as possible on the rubber block with a ballpoint pen.
5. Give each participant a lino cutter and V-shaped #2 blade. Make sure to discuss safety measures for using the blades prior to distribution.
6. Teach participants how to carve with the cutter by demonstrating two methods: a) negative (easier version; carving on the line, as shown in top right photo) and b) positive (more challenging and longer version; carving in all of the empty space around the line, as shown in bottom right photo). It is helpful to bring sample stamps of each style, to show how the finished product will look.
7. Invite participants to test their stamp on a piece of paper (as shown in photo, below left), and make adjustments as needed.



(Instructions continue on next page)

8. Once participants are ready, lay out long strips of white fabric such as an old bed sheet (one for each participant). Each participant stamps their symbol once on each sheet, wherever they feel it best fits (as shown in the photo, below left). In the end, each sheet will include one of each symbol.
9. Debrief the experience, asking participants to reflect on their process and products.
10. All participants take home their rubber stamp (in a Ziploc bag) and one of the collective tapestries. (Shown in photo, below right.)



Discussion Questions

How do non-verbal expressions foster different perspectives on turning points?

What arises from seeing symbols individually and through a group lens?

CONTEXT | Bifurcation points (points of instability in a system, when an interruption forces chaos and reorganization) invite moments of greatest creativity. This activity allows participants to explore these moments through a physical experience. By combining the symbols into a collective tapestry at the end of the exercise, participants experience the power of collective action and artistic empowerment to convey community values.

Image Exploration [Est. 20 minutes]

GOAL | To explore ways that images are connected to worldviews.

ACTIONS |

1. Before the session, ask each participant to bring a personal photograph that in some way reflects their culture or worldview.
2. In partners, invite each person to tell a brief story related to their image. Switch partners.
3. Then, ask each partner to briefly draw a response to one another's stories. Compare the drawings with the original photograph and notice what new aspects have emerged.

Supply Checklist:

- ☒ Photographs (requested prior to session)
- ☒ 8.5 x 11 paper (1 pp)
- ☒ Markers, pastels, etc.

Discussion Questions

How can images help to communicate worldviews?

Where can influential images in one's culture be found?

CONTEXT | A photograph can profoundly reflect aspects of culture. Visible images portray time and memory, and are vital tools for the preservation of cultural narratives. They also provide ways of voicing things that are not easily expressed in speech. Through photography and visual art, we can explore how images frame and reflect perceptions of the world.

Recommendations | This exercise is similar to *Artifacts* (page 37), but both can be used.

ACTIVITIES: COMMUNITY

Artifacts [Est. 30 minutes]

GOAL | To explore the relationship between narrative and cultural identities.

Supply Checklist:

☒ Cultural artifact from home (1 pp)

ACTIONS |

1. Before the session begins, ask participants to bring in an artifact that is linked to their cultural heritage.
2. Invite each person to share how this item relates to their culture.
3. Debrief in plenary, facilitating dialogue amongst participants.

Variation: Ask participants to bring an object based on themes such as devotion, passion, possibility, future, etc.

Discussion Questions

How do cultural narratives shape practices of memory?

How do particular artifacts relate to memories?

CONTEXT | Cultural artifacts anchor memory and perpetuate values and worldviews. Sharing them in a group builds understanding and empathy.

Recommendations | Similar to *Image Exploration* (page 36).

Celebration [Est. 45 minutes]

GOAL | To explore how cultural celebrations influence relational dynamics.

ACTIONS |

1. Ask participants to free-write without stopping for five minutes on the theme of ‘celebration.’
2. These questions may spark the flow of writing:
 - What are some of the textures, smells, tastes, or colours of celebration in your culture?
 - Which celebrations do you identify with?
4. After free-writing, ask participants to circle three words that stand out for them. Invite them to notice which senses are represented, and reflect on the meaning of the chosen celebration. Each person then briefly presents their choices.
5. Debrief, exploring connections among celebration, meaning, and resilience.

Supply Checklist:

- ☒ 8.5 x 11 lined paper (5 sheets pp)
- ☒ Pens (1 pp)

Discussion Questions

How are community values celebrated?

What kinds of celebrations could foster community collaboration and cohesiveness?

What role can celebration potentially play in bridging differences?

CONTEXT | Celebrations are tremendous tools for strengthening resilience in communities. They often involve reciprocity and collaboration, stressing commonalities.

Landscapes of Images ■ [Est. 1 hour 30 minutes]

GOAL | To explore connections amongst physical landscapes, a sense of belonging and cultural identities.

ACTIONS |

1. Each person receives a digital camera or is invited to use their phone to take images in their environment/community that reflect identity or belonging. Suggestions include:
 - landmarks that have historical or cultural significance
 - natural elements within the landscape (i.e. crevasses, peaks, embankments, rivers, etc.)
 - geographical aspects of the physical landscape that speak to a sense of home or belonging.
2. Ask participants to write in a journal about how the images relate to belonging and identity.

Supply Checklist:

- ☒ Digital cameras (1 pp)
- ☒ Pens (1 pp)
- ☒ 8.5 x 11 lined paper (3 sheets pp)

Discussion Questions

What images could serve as springboards for animated dialogue?

How might photography catalyze new forms of dialogue?

What is the effect of images that misrepresent a culture?

CONTEXT | A single image holds multiple stories. Photography accents ways that the viewer and the viewed inhabit a revolving axis of perception and reflection. Critical analysis of how images literally and figuratively inform worldviews is thus important. Just as our impact on the environment is measured through ecological footprints, cultural legacies can often be measured through visual footprints.

Recommendations | Similar to *Resilient Imagery* (page 40); choose one but not both per session or series.

Resilient Imagery ■ [Est. 30 minutes prep session, 1 hour review session]

GOAL | To explore how media influences perceptions of communities.

ACTIONS |

1. This is designed as a homework assignment, and should be given after some previous work with photography and visual images has been established.
2. Ask participants to photograph images of resilience in their communities from diverse perspectives: people, places, animate and inanimate objects, happenings, festivals, street scenes, nature scenes, etc.
3. Remind participants about photography ethics and aesthetics. Ask them to note words or phrases that are stimulated by taking the photos, and to email both the images and words to the facilitator before the next session.
4. Turn all of the selected photos into a slideshow for viewing.
5. View the work in the context of resilience. Photographers should speak about their work after others have had a chance to comment. Possible questions include:
 - What are the emotions that you feel upon first glance?
 - What captivates you, or draws you in?
 - Which aesthetic principles are at play?
 - Do you see resilience in the photo? Where?
 - Why do you think the artist chose to take this picture?
 - *(If a person is in the photo)* Do you think the artist is personally connected to this person? What does the image tell you about their relationship?

Supply Checklist:

- ☒ Digital cameras (1 pp)
- ☒ Projector & computer (for slideshow)

Discussion Questions

What images serve as springboards for dialogue?

How might photography catalyze new forms of dialogue?

When images misrepresent a cultural group, what happens? How can these images be counteracted?

CONTEXT | Media and photography have immense power to affect audiences' viewpoints. They always contain biases and points of view, though these may not be immediately apparent. This activity invites participants to portray their communities as they would like them to be perceived.

Recommendations | This activity should be presented after *Magazine Scramble* (page 53), and potentially after *Hot Words* (page 28). It is a good practice exercise to prepare for *Photo Essay* (page 54). This exercise is similar to *Landscapes of Images* (page 39); choose one but not both per session or series.

Intergenerational Lines [Est. 40 minutes]

GOAL | To explore poetry in the context of intergenerational dialogue.

ACTIONS |

1. Convene an intergenerational group. Ask them to name issues that are relevant to all generations represented. As they are named, ask each person to clap loudly on issues that they want to explore. Choose the topic that has the loudest applause.
2. Divide the group according to generations, and explain that each group will be responsible for writing a line of poetry on the chosen topic.
3. Pass the paper from one group to another so that each group has at least one turn to compose a line. When a poem is circulating, groups may start another poem, so that several poems are being composed at once. Groups may find a natural close or they can be given a desired length.
4. Once the poems are complete, invite one member from each group to read them aloud. After the poem is read by a member of its generation invite observations about the tone, rhythm, and points of convergence. Also invite comments on the topic itself, and what the poetry has revealed about it.

Discussion Questions

Which intergenerational issues could benefit from creative exchange?

What role does poetry play in a given culture?

How can a greater sense of unity be facilitated among generations?

Variation: Write a poem to an older or younger version of yourself (you can choose to write to yourself 20 years into the future or 20 years into the past).

CONTEXT | Poetic images transmit values and history across generational lines. As elders share a living library of words to younger counterparts, younger participants can offer related contemporary insights. This experience demonstrates intergenerational resilience.

ACTIVITIES: LEADERSHIP

Identifying Leaders ∞ [Est. 35 minutes]

GOAL | To recognize positive leadership qualities.

ACTIONS |

1. Ask participants to define 'leader' or 'leadership.' Write their words or phrases on a flip-chart paper or whiteboard.
2. Divide the group into small groups of 3-4 people. Ask them to answer the following three questions:
 - Name a leadership quality that you currently possess.
 - Name a leadership quality that you hope to possess someday.
 - Name respected leaders you know or have observed.
3. Reconvene as a plenary group. Ask everyone to share their observations about leadership and its relationship to positive change.

Discussion Questions

What leadership qualities increase resilience in communities?

What approach to leadership could promote generative community change? What are the potential obstacles to positive change?

How can leaders create a climate of trust and facilitate creative relationship-building? What can leaders do to show they are trustworthy?

CONTEXT | Leadership plays a vital role in community health. Naming effective leadership qualities can be useful in raising awareness about individual and collective resources. Identifying leaders who have courageously navigated complexities inspires good leadership in others as well as modeling the specific demands and challenges of leadership. Highlighting leadership qualities such as effective communication, relationship-building, and proactively engaging with personal and community networks is helpful in building community resilience.

Recommendations | Similar to *Word Associations* (page 24) and *Creating Definitions* (page 23).

Affinity Theatre ♦★⌘ [Est. 1 hour 30 minutes, depending on number of groups]

GOAL | To learn leadership skills to respond constructively to negative projections.

ACTIONS |

1. Participants return to their affinity groups from the exercise on page 30.
2. Each group devises a short vignette involving a conflict over a line no one wants to hear again (as devised in previous affinity groups) and plays out the scenario once through.
3. The same scenario begins again and audience members are invited to say “Freeze” when they see a potential way to intervene with a statement or question that will shift the dynamics. When “Freeze” is called out from an audience member, the scene stops immediately, and this person enters into the scene to replace one of the actors. The original actor leaves the scene and the new actor is the first to continue the same scene with a statement or question, from where it left off. The other actors improvise around this new intervention and the scene continues accordingly.
4. At any time a new audience member can say “Freeze” and enter into the scene to replace an actor with a new response.
5. After all groups have performed, reconvene as a large group and discuss the interventions that were demonstrated. Such questions could include:
 - *What did people notice?*
 - *What worked to shift the dynamics in a positive way?*
 - *Did some of the suggestions create more conflict?*

Discussion Questions

What significant messages are being transmitted, either verbally or non-verbally, in a given conflict?

What worked to shift the dynamics in a positive way?

CONTEXT | By portraying difficult situations in vignettes, participants can develop and experiment with personal skills in a supportive structure. Devising alternative strategies involves the consideration of underlying contributing factors to conflict and violence. When audience members intervene imaginatively, others are inspired.

Recommendations | This activity is designed to follow *Affinity Groups* (page 30).

Reactive vs. Responsive [Est. 30 minutes]

GOAL | To learn how reactive and responsive leadership feels.

ACTIONS |

1. Split participants into groups of 3-4 people and ask each group to create a sculpture that depicts a *reactive* leadership style.
2. Facilitators animate each sculpture by tapping their hands on the shoulders of the actors and asking questions like:
 - What is your secret thought right now?
 - What is your greatest desire in this moment?
 - What do you fear most?
 - Who do you trust here and why?
 - If you could move in one direction, where would you go?

Participants should respond in character.

3. Ask audience members what they observe in the body language of the actors (i.e. levels, eye contact, positioning, etc.).
4. Ask the group to move into a sculpture that depicts a *responsive* leadership style for the same situation (each person shifts their posture in some way).
5. Animate the responsive sculpture with questions again.
6. Create a dialogue surrounding these images:
 - *What are some common themes in all of the reactive sculptures? In the responsive ones?*
 - *What were the power differences?*
 - *What is the body language telling you?*

Variation: Use Forum Theatre style to invite audience members to replace participants in a reactive sculpture with a more responsive pose.

Discussion Questions

How can responsive leadership help prevent negative projections about culture?

What kinds of creative responses are available?

How could metaphors help expand perceptions of identity?

CONTEXT | Effective leaders are likely to be highly responsive leaders; being responsive involves thoughtfully and creatively adapting behaviours to circumstances. This entails taking space and time to notice what is happening before determining a response. In contrast, being reactive often involves a high-alert stress mode. When leaders are responsive, communities are more likely to mirror these qualities. Conversely, when a leader is reactive, a community may lose its equilibrium. Responsive leadership fosters reciprocal trust and resilience in communities. In these scenes the actors and audience members become active participants and co-creators of responsive approaches.

Recommendations | Similar to *Affinity Theatre* (page 43). This activity requires a short introduction to the definitions and attributes of responsive vs. reactive leadership.

Artistic Legacies [Est. 1 hour]

GOAL | To reflect on the role of legacies.

ACTIONS |

1. Invite participants to free-write for five minutes on the theme of 'legacy.' Ask participants to highlight three sentences from their writing that resonate with them.
2. Have each participant integrate these sentences into their own 'letter to the future world,' a hundred years from now.
3. In dyads, partners read their letters to one another. Each partner is then tasked with developing a creative way to present their partner's letter to the rest of the group.
4. After all have presented, engage the group in reflection and dialogue on the theme of legacies.

Supply Checklist:

- ☒ 8.5 x 11 lined paper (3 pp)
- ☒ Pens (1 pp)

Discussion Questions

How can legacies contribute to resilience in a community?

Whose legacies influence particular worldviews?

In what circumstances would it be particularly valuable to cultivate legacies?

CONTEXT | Legacies tap into visceral emotional, cultural and spiritual values. Individual and collective legacies provoke us to consciously situate ourselves in time by exploring how our actions today will be remembered tomorrow. They also invite individuals and communities to consider how they would like to be remembered.

Recommendations | Similar to *Celebrations* (page 38).

Intended Intonations [Est. 15 minutes]

GOAL | To explore how qualities of voice influence communication patterns.

ACTIONS |

1. Ask three participants to line up next to one another in front of the group. Have each person deliver the famous phrase, *"To be or not to be, that is the question."*
2. Ask all three participants to repeat the phrase a second time, slightly adjusting the tone, timing, and rhythm of the same phrase. Have them emphasize different words, and encourage others to watch how the meanings of the words shift as the emphasis changes.
3. Have participants each deliver the line a third time. On this third round, divide the words amongst the three people. The first person will articulate the first two words, *"To be"*, the next person will say, *"or not to be"* and the third person, *"that is the question."*
4. Dialogue and debrief on expressive qualities of voice, and how these can be misinterpreted across cultures.

Discussion Questions

How do textures of language influence how culture is understood?

How can shifts in voice create new openings for communication in conflict dynamics?

How can voice work facilitate a greater attunement of the physical, cognitive and emotional responses in conflict situations?

CONTEXT | Subtle intonations, inflections, spaces, pitch, volume, and timing of a simple statement can alter the perceived meaning. Some cultures attend more to pitch and volume in vocal expression, while others place more emphasis on intonation. Raising awareness about these variations inoculates participants against misinterpretations of those speaking an unfamiliar language.

Webs of Rhythm [Est. 40 minutes]

GOAL | To explore multiple rhythms within communication patterns.

ACTIONS |

1. Ask participants to draw, colour, paint, or sketch while listening to a piece of music with their dominant or non-dominant hand.
2. Working from the drawing, invite participants to free-write for five minutes. Then, ask participants to underline three words that resonate most deeply with them and circle the one that stands out the most.
3. Have each person articulate their final word to the large group with a particular volume, intonation and accompanying gesture. Ask one participant to be the scribe and post all of the words on a flip chart. After each person has offered a word, have the remaining participants call out the same word in unison with associated sounds and gestures.
4. Once each person has had a turn, ask each participant to translate the syllables in their word into a clapping pattern (i.e. the word 'unity' would translate into three claps: u-ni-ty). Have the group repeat these syllabic rhythms together in unison after each person's word. Continue until all words have been translated into syllabic rhythms.
5. Ask participants to return to their original sound, gesture and word. Have them walk around the room while passing by and encountering other people's rhythms. Encourage them to listen for patterns, harmonies, and dissonances that arise from each encounter. Do they lose or alter their patterns as they encounter others; do entirely new patterns arise?

Supply Checklist:

- ☒ 8.5 x 11 plain paper (3 pp)
- ☒ 8.5 x 11 lined paper (3 pp)
- ☒ Pens (1 pp)
- ☒ Markers, pastels, paints, etc.
- ☒ Stereo or music player

Discussion Questions

Where is harmony apparent in particular cultures?

How can people maintain attunement with one another amidst diversity?

How can leaders set a tone of harmony in a community?

CONTEXT | We are always moving through resonance and dissonance with one another. Embodied listening heightens our capacity to become attuned to one another's shifting tones and rhythms. A person's timbre, pitch or rhythm can generate an infinite number of responses in others. If we are too attached to the patterns of our own rhythms, finding harmony with others can be difficult. Coming into resonance means shifting patterns of thought and action from blame to shared responsibility, from judgment to empathy. This exercise helps participants notice how words and rhythms resonate across cultures.

Improvised Alternatives [Est. 40 minutes]

GOAL | To gain comfort in improvisational storytelling.

Supply Checklist:

☒ Q-cards or recipe cards (1 pack)

ACTIONS |

1. Facilitate a brainstorming session in a large group by asking participants to think of conflicts/tensions currently relevant to them. Invite one participant to be the scribe during this session, and to record key words or phrases on small recipe cards. Place the cards in a visible place, and ask the group to identify one of the named conflicts as a focus.
2. Ask for a volunteer to start a first sentence on the theme of this conflict as the beginning to a fictional narrative. In turn, each contributes a sentence. When someone pauses or hesitates, suggest that they pick up a recipe card from the middle of the circle to prompt new ideas for the storyline. Invite participants to observe the plot as it develops. Is there a resolution? Are there places where it stalls? Where are the turning points? What contributes to the cohesion and continuity?
3. When the story finds a natural close or time is up, ask participants to comment on the experience:
 - *Were there surprises?*
 - *What new insights emerged?*
 - *How did the words on the recipe cards shift the trajectory of the story?*

Discussion Questions

How is it possible to cultivate a spirit of generosity in the centre of intractable conflict?

In what circumstances could qualities of improvisation help to shift conflict?

How can the principles of improvisation strengthen relationships across cultural divides?

CONTEXT | Improvisation requires both readiness and surrender to what arises in the moment. A similar quality of readiness in conflict reminds everyone that it is important to let go of preconceived agendas. Improvisation is also a powerful tool for investigating contradictions and incongruities, as it fosters re-patterning of habitual responses.

Move & Mold ★ ⌘ [Est. 15 minutes]

GOAL | To explore how kinesthetic intelligence can affect relationships.

ACTIONS |

1. Ask participants to walk around the space, making eye contact with one another and moving at different paces, finding empty spaces when you say “move.”
2. When you say “mold,” participants quickly find a partner close to them. Call out one of the words from the previous week’s exercise on responsive and reactive leadership. (For example, “Mold passion!” “Mold strength!” “Mold Ego!”)
3. Partners instantly mold their bodies into a relational pose that reflects this word. This goes on for several rounds, as participants shift from moving to molding while switching partners at every turn.
4. Once participants feel comfortable in this activity, you can do the same activity in groups of three.

Discussion Questions

How do movement patterns influence conflict?

What does the embodiment of uncomfortable words teach conflict parties?

How do different kinds of words resonate in the body?

CONTEXT | Words take on new meanings when translated through physical vocabularies of the body. Because the momentum that builds in conflict is rooted in our physicality, it is important to increase awareness of this resource. Kinesthetic intelligence yields vital cues in interpersonal conflicts, expanding capacities to understand ourselves and others.

Recommendations | This activity is designed to follow *Reactive vs. Responsive* (page 44).

ACTIVITIES: PERSPECTIVE

Offbeat Musical Chairs ∞ ⌘ 🎵 [Est. 20 minutes]

GOAL | To recognize how worldviews and perceptions are shaped by context.

ACTIONS |

1. Make sure there are chairs for all participants in the room – set in a circle, or randomly throughout the room.
2. Ask participants to walk around the room. Announce that throughout the entire session, we are going to get up and sit somewhere else, to change perspectives.
3. Each time participants sit down in another chair, allow time for reflection, to look at the angles, corners, material objects, neighbours, etc.
4. After completing several configurations, facilitate a dialogue to engage participants in reflecting on questions such as:
 - *Which new perspectives emerged that were not noticed before?*
 - *Did you have favourite locations or viewpoints?*
 - *Did the exercise feel uncomfortable? Why or why not?*
 - *Did you notice small details or the overall scene from each vantage point? What does this tell you about your perceptual habits?*
 - *How could lessons from this exercise be applied in other contexts?*

Discussion Questions

What will motivate a community to explore a challenging issue from multiple vantage points?

How can physical movement open up new perspectives and insights for creative problem-solving skills?

What are some ways to integrate multiple perspectives and expose a range of community viewpoints?

CONTEXT | Awareness of multiple perspectives help individuals and communities acknowledge identities, histories, current realities and future possibilities. Multi-angled perspectives reveal a more holistic picture of any given context. Similarly, relational patterns in social systems are rooted in people's perceptions. In asking the simple question: "What do you see?" viewers begin to realize multiple perceptual choices. Resilient communities are able to manage and acknowledge multiple perspectives.

Recommendations | Similar to *Walking through Space* (page 19).

Honouring the Storyteller ∞ ◆ [Est. 25 minutes]

GOAL | To recognize the importance of the storyteller in a resilient community.

ACTIONS |

1. Facilitate dialogue in small groups to explore the role of storytellers in particular cultures. Ask each group to discuss the following questions:
 - Where do stories of resilience in your community come from?
 - How have stories of resilience in your community shifted over the past 10 years?
 - Who are the storytellers in your life?
 - From whom would you like to hear more stories?
2. Reconvene in a plenary group to hear themes from each group, and ask participants to notice the similarities and differences of each group.

Discussion Questions

Where are there safe and accessible places for collective storytelling?

Are there stories that are seldom shared, but profoundly important to particular cultures?

What are the optimal conditions for generative storytelling?

CONTEXT | Stories shape who we are, where we come from, and where we might go. Through stories, we give meaning and significance to experience, gain insight into lineage and histories, create and re-create our sense of self and unify divided communities. Stories also demonstrate how to meet and overcome obstacles. Allegiance to a single story is a common form of fundamentalism.

Recommendations | Similar to *Resilient Haikus* (page 26); these could be combined for a deeper exploration on the theme of storytelling.

Hot Images ∞ ◆ ★ ✎ [Est. 30 minutes]

GOAL | To become aware of how common stereotypes are embodied.

ACTIONS |

1. Divide participants into small groups to devise an embodied image (sculpture) that reflects a common stereotype in their community. Invite them to create and make adjustments to the image in silence.
2. Invite audience participants to brainstorm potential titles for a news heading that reflects elements of the image.
3. The group that is portraying the image may shift positions to more accurately mirror the news heading, again without discussion.
4. Viewers add another news headline to this new image.
5. Ask how the two headlines are connected to one another. How are they similar or different? Further questions may include:
 - *Where do stereotypes begin in communities?*
 - *What everyday actions can perpetuate stereotypes?*
 - *What is the effect that negative stereotyping can have on a group's sense of resilience?*

Discussion Questions

How do stereotypes manifest through embodied encounters?

How can a deepening knowledge of physical responses serve to bridge divisions caused by stereotypes and stigmas?

How are gestures that perpetuate cultural stereotypes in communities potent?

CONTEXT | Body positioning and postures reveal how people label or project social identities onto each other. Stereotypes are conveyed by images and often manifest unconsciously in physical vocabularies. This exercise helps participants increase their awareness of the role of media in shaping and shifting group identities.

Recommendations | Similar to *Hot Words* (page 28). Could be a helpful precursor to *Magazine Scramble* (page 53).

Magazine Scramble ∞ ◆ ■ [Est. 30 minutes]

GOAL | To explore how worldviews, perceptions and memories are cultivated and ‘developed’ through photo images and visual culture.

ACTIONS |

1. Ask participants to briefly journal on their biases. Then, ask them to share one surprise they found in these reflections.
2. On a flip-chart, brainstorm prominent images used by insiders and outsiders to portray the participants’ cultures. What do these images communicate and symbolize?
3. Give small groups (of 3-4 people each) assorted magazines (both culture-specific and ‘mainstream’) and ask them to cut or rip out images that provoke discussion or are culturally salient.
4. Ask participants to discuss the following questions in their small groups:
 - Who is choosing and composing the images? For what purpose?
 - Which images perpetuate stereotypes, from those you have chosen?
 - Which images of resilience ‘stand out’ from what you have chosen?
 - How do these images of resilience compare with images in dominant media sources?
 - How do media or social media images influence relationships, ideas, and modes of engagement in communities?
5. Reconvene in the plenary group. One spokesperson from each group shares their insights, based on the four above questions. They may also show their images to illustrate their points. Ask the group: *What representations of resilience would you like to see in the media?*

Supply Checklist:

- ☒ 8.5 x 11 plain paper (3 pp)
- ☒ Culturally specific magazines (approx. 5)
- ☒ Mainstream magazines (approx. 5)

Discussion Questions

Are images in media considered more objective than the written word? Is this perception accurate?

Why are media biases more powerful than other messages?

What can be done to reshape negative biases about communities?

CONTEXT | Visual media plays a powerful role in creating biases, highlighting specific images that shape particular interpretations of accounts. Images are never complete; who or what has been left out may speak more loudly than what has been featured. This exercise encourages participants to read and watch critically, and to be mindful of the community images they contribute to.

Recommendations | Helpful precursor to *Resilient Imagery* (page 40). Could follow *Hot Images* (page 52).

Photo Essay ∞ ◆ ■ [Est. 15 minutes in prep session; 1 hour in review session]

GOAL | To empower participants to share stories of resilience.

ACTIONS |

1. Introduce the photo essay as a form, with samples of work that demonstrate powerful photo essays of 3-5 images each that convey a story. Remind participants of the aesthetic and ethical aspects of photography covered in the *Resilient Imagery* exercise.
2. Ask participants to choose 3-5 complementary images to photograph, as a story of resilience in their community. They should also write a short artist's statement (one paragraph) to describe how the images relate to the theme, and note specific details necessary to fully understand the composition.
3. Plan a subsequent session at least two weeks after the preparatory session where you introduced the photo essay exercise.
4. At least two days prior to the subsequent session, ask participants to email you their final photo essay as individual JPEG files (with both their name and sequence number in the file name) and an artist's statement as a Word document.
5. Create a slideshow of all photo essays to showcase during the session.
6. Invite each artist to give a one-minute summary of their work to the group as their photographs are projected.
7. Invite questions and comments from the other participants. Prompts can include:
 - What surprises you about this photo essay?
 - Which questions about resilience does it address?
 - What is the general feeling of the photo essay? What are its main emotions?
 - What are you curious about in this story?

Supply Checklist:

- ☑ Digital cameras (1 pp)
- ☑ Projector & computer (for slideshow)

Discussion Questions

In what ways does viewing a photo essay convey a different perspective than reading a written story?

Why is visual imagery so powerful in representing a particular angle?

In what ways can negative media images be shifted?

CONTEXT | Here, participants specifically look for resilient moments and stories within their communities. This experience empowers them to see their communities via strength-based lenses. The skills they learn in this exercise can assist them in future efforts to serve as a catalyst for community resilience.

Recommendations | This activity should follow *Resilient Imagery* (page 40), which acts as practice for the photo essay. Other warm-up exercises include *Magazine Scramble* (page 53) and *Hot Images* (page 52).

Crossed Wires ♦ ○ [Est. 30 minutes]

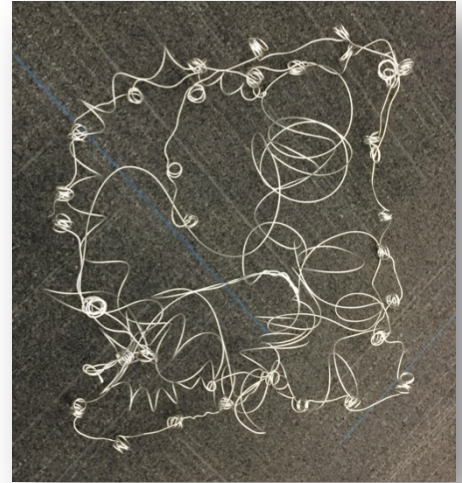
GOAL | To practice attentively listening to stories in creative ways.

ACTIONS |

1. In partners, invite participants to briefly share a story of a time when they needed to be resilient.
2. As the storyteller is speaking, their partner begins shaping a piece of crafting wire to convey the story in a visual way. It can be an abstract representation of the story, convey the feelings of the protagonist in the story, or reproduce a scene of the conflict – whatever the artist chooses.
3. After both have shared their stories and shaped their pieces of wire, invite them to share their wire sculptures and what they symbolize with each other. Partners may choose to combine their work into one bigger sculpture or leave them as discrete pieces.
4. In the plenary group, allow each pair to report on their experiences.

Supply Checklist:

☒ Armature Wire (1 pp)



CONTEXT | Physically shaping the essence of a story with malleable wire is an imaginative way to pay attention, while synthesizing what is being related. This approach can be debriefed by discussing what happens when “wires become crossed” in challenging relational dynamics. Sculpting wire can help partners notice how they pay attention and what stands out for them in stories. It is a tangible way to draw attention to, and to improve, listening.

Recommendations | Similar to *Resilient Haikus* (page 26).

Discussion Questions

How can the artistic medium of a wire sculpture add new dimensions to active listening?

What artistic media can support storytelling?

How can stories expressed through non-verbal art forms add tangible value to communities?

CLOSING ACTIVITIES

Free Writing ∞ [Est. 20 minutes]

GOAL | To investigate how fresh or original responses emerge through free-writing.

Supply Checklist:

- ☒ 8.5 x 11 lined paper (3 pp)
- ☒ Pens (1 pp)

ACTIONS |

1. Invite participants to free-write for 10-15 minutes. Encourage everyone to keep writing for the entire time without censoring themselves. Grammar, punctuation and sentence structure do not matter. This form of writing can be used at the beginning of a session to introduce a theme, in the middle of a session as a monitoring and evaluation tool, or at the end to aid in reflection. It is useful to let writers know when the time is nearly up.
2. After the writing time, provide an opportunity for people to share what they have written as they are comfortable. Be sure to let participants know they can pass and choose not to share with the others. Alternatively, ask them to share in partners and reflect with one another on the themes, insights and surprises that came through the writing.

Discussion Questions

How can unedited thought processes be generative for promoting resilience?

What are some examples of how writing or other arts processes might foster community resilience?

Variation: Cut out photographs of current events/conflicts/issues and spread the photos in the middle of the room so all images can be seen. Have each person choose one that catches their eye and give them five minutes to free-write about the photograph.

Variation: Ask individuals to free-write on a metaphor that reflects the relationship they have to conflict.

CONTEXT | Writing is a powerful way to generate insights into unconscious perceptions. Awareness of habitual patterns of thinking can open original alternatives and assist in shifting conflicts.

Recommendations | Similar to *Celebrations* (page 38).

Creative Reflections [Est. 35 minutes]

GOAL | To create time and space for synthesis and reflection.

ACTIONS |

1. In dyads, invite partners to identify three places of learning that can be communicated non-verbally to the rest of the group (through movement, visual art, etc.) and to compose their presentations however they would like.
2. Ask partners to creatively present these discoveries to the rest of the group in at least two arts modalities (dance and song, art and poetry, etc.)
3. Invite dialogue with the group including questions like:
 - *What did you see?*
 - *What aspects of learning were part of this presentation?*
 - *What values about learning were part of this work?*
 - *What does this tell you about optimal conditions for learning?*
 - *How do your learning preferences relate to your behaviour in conflict?*
 - *How can you set up future conflict situations to be learning spaces?*

Supply Checklist:

- ☒ 8.5 x 11 paper
- ☒ Markers, pastels, paints, etc.

Discussion Questions

What settings foster learning and how does this vary depending on culture and learning styles?

How can the arts tangibly assist in creating reflective practices?

How does learning happen?

CONTEXT | Learning is both profoundly individual and collective. By inviting participants to reflect on how learning happens and where they experience it most productively, they become more aware of their preferences. From this awareness, their capacity to inhabit conflicts with learning attitudes grows.

Recommendations | Use this near the end of a series, once participants are comfortable with arts-based modalities.

Rituals of Gratitude ∞ ☸ [Est. 15 minutes]

GOAL | To mark significant moments in a group process.

ACTIONS |

1. Lay out a variety of objects in the centre of the circle (beads, stones, shells, etc.).
2. Invite participants to choose one object that they are drawn to and ask them to simply sit with the object for a few minutes.
3. Ask each participant to share why they chose that particular object (colour, texture, association, etc.) and invite them to pass the object to one other person as a gesture of gratitude. As they offer this gesture, ask them to articulate specific qualities in the other person that they have particularly valued. Set a time limit for this exchange so that each person has a chance to take part in the ritual.

Supply Checklist:

- ☒ Objects (beads, stones, shells, etc.)
- ☒ Markers, pastels, paints, etc.

Discussion Questions

How can culturally fluent rituals be created?

In what circumstances could it be risky to implement a ritual?

How might rituals enhance resilience in communities?

CONTEXT | Rituals play an important role in building resilient communities. Rituals offer powerful social platforms for inclusion and can strengthen collective identities amidst adversity. They are also important modes for groups to begin to take leave of each other while acknowledging their relationships and time shared.

Popcorn Words 🌀 🎵 [Est. 5 minutes]

GOAL | To gauge how each group member is feeling at the start or end of a session.

ACTIONS |

1. Gather all participants in a standing circle.
2. Orchestrate key word improvisations by inviting participants to speak a word into the circle (either one that has come up during the session, or – if used as an opener – something they are bringing with them). Ask participants to choose one word that is alive for them.
3. Assume the role of a ‘conductor.’ Point to participants in random sequence to indicate when each should voice their keyword aloud. Play with volume, speed and the sequencing of words that are similar and diverse.

Discussion Questions

How do people distil the essence of what matters in the midst of complex community issues?

Where can members of diverse groups voice their differences and discover common understandings in a safe space?

How can the arts illuminate what is valuable in a community?

CONTEXT | Playing with words illuminates what matters at a particular time. Rearranging words poetically can reflect synergy that includes and also transcends the contribution of each participant. This fosters mutual recognition and collective understanding of issues being explored.

Recommendations | Though we have included this activity as a closing exercise, it could also work well as an opener. It is a useful exercise when you are running low on time, but need to open or close a session consciously, despite time constraints.

Fortunately Unfortunately ∞ [Est. 20 minutes]

GOAL | To practice improvisation techniques that will help participants as future leaders and constructive community members.

ACTIONS |

1. Invite participants to sit in a circle. Ask the group where they see their community 20 years in the future. Each person speaks in turn, alternately beginning their sentences with either the word 'fortunately' or 'unfortunately'.
2. Request that the participants speak in the present tense, as if they are all 20 years into the future. (For example, "Fortunately the youth all speak the Punjabi language. Unfortunately almost all of our Gurdwaras have closed down.")

Discussion Questions

What skillsets are important to responding and adjusting to community changes?

How could improvisation techniques transform experiences of conflict into opportunities for growth?

Where are principles of improvisation being practiced? What helps people step out of habitual roles and conventional scripts?

CONTEXT | The capacity to change quickly between two viewpoints requires imagination and spontaneity. This in turn surfaces diverse perspectives. This creative exercise encourages people to explore what may be possible while simultaneously developing flexibility of thought, despite obstacles and setbacks. Improvisation develops skills for solving complex problems and preventing conflict escalation.

Recommendations | Recommended at the end of a series, as the final activity.

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CRANE (Conflict, Resolution, Arts & Intercultural Experience). *Final Report: A Research/Practice Project of the Program on Dispute Resolution*, University of British Columbia, Canada. 2004-2009.

CRANE (Conflict, Resolution, Arts & Intercultural Experience). *Arts, Creativity and Intercultural Conflict Resolution Activities Manual*, University of British Columbia, Canada. 2013.

This toolkit was created as part of a series of workshops with Punjabi youth designed and facilitated by Michelle LeBaron, Carrie MacLeod, Ashli Akins, and Joty Sandhu.

The toolkit was written and edited by Ashli Akins, Carrie MacLeod, Michelle LeBaron, and designed by Ashli Akins.

Art... sharpens us, makes us vulnerable, frightens us.
The practice of true art is the practice of knowledge
 unseduced by its own beauty.
We should understand it as rational
 because whatever its origin, mask, or style,
it is memory, it is perception, it is imagination, and it is knowledge.
There is no combination more powerful than these four,
and there is no void more dangerous to the human project than their loss.

- Toni Morrison -