

Creating Connection Online

Create vibrant, deeply connected online spaces for learning, sharing and supporting each other. Here's how:

Create the Container

- Open the space with a ritual, such as:
 - Create an opportunity for participants to clear and become present.
 - Call forth each person to offer an intention, or the desired energy for the call or session, and cast aside distractions, worries or other responsibilities.
 - Breathe together, lead a brief grounding/presencing meditation or offer a reading to set the tone.

Establish Expectations

- Agreements, agreements, agreements: define the rules of engagement so folks know what to expect, and what behaviour is okay and not okay.
 - These create safety and courage so people can show up fully.
 - Include agreements about appropriate participation, understanding that some people want to sit back and observe, and others want to share and vocalize -- make all ways okay, and check in on the quiet ones.
 - Clarify roles within the space.
- From time to time, ask if needs are being met, and adjust, placing the bulk of responsibility on participants to care for themselves.

Make Time for Sharing

As the leader of a group, such as a workshop or course, briefly share your story in a way that's relevant to the purpose of the gathering (what will participants connect to in you?) and ask participants to share something relevant with the group as well (limit time to maintain your agenda as appropriate).

On the first and subsequent calls, allocate time for getting to know each other and checking in with each participant -- ensure there is time for all to share.

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Be Creative!

- Use the shared chat or whiteboard function to collaborate during the session.
- Create a code for your group: hand signals, coloured cards, other visuals to express agreement, applause or questions (movement, wearing funny hats, waving a towel or a shoe).
- Use your geography: offer virtual hugs, high fives and fist bumps; breath together; move together -- a stretch, a pose, a dance!
- Notice body language and energetic shifts and speak them into the space -- see what needs to be discussed or shared.
- Let there be silence, and let it breathe: unhurried spaciousness creates permission for people to show up.
- Encourage participants to express appreciation for, acknowledge and express what they witness in each other.

Close the Container for Continued Connection

- To close the space, ask participants to offer:
 - A one-word take-away or key learning.
 - A commitment or action to integrate what they learned.
 - Appreciation for what transpired.
 - Appreciation for another participant and how they showed up, grew or offered value to the group.
- Offer a closing prayer, poem or blessing.
- Encourage continued community after everyone logs off, such as using other technology -- texting, chatting, messenger apps, a private or public Facebook group or community (moderated or self-directed).

Be Yourself

Take a few minutes before you get onto a call or meeting to connect with the energy you want to portray. Let your authentic personality shine through and don't try to BE anything other than who you naturally are! Just do you!