

Title: What it means to me

Purpose

To practice sharing your own reactions in a heartfelt and authentic way

Context

We have identified that when activists share their own perspectives and reactions with authenticity, this can have a powerful impact.

We sometimes chose to share facts and make demands rather than be open about how we individually feel about the issues that we are campaigning on. A sober and emotionally honest description of what it means to you can create a connection and rapport with a listener that shifts the debate and starts to really engage.

This activity is designed to encourage people to practice this in a group setting.

Objectives

- To identify and share how you feel about the topics you are exploring
- To find a way of talking about this that is moving and powerful
- To practice being present and communicating authentically

Instructions

1. Set up the discussion by creating a context –
 - a. Our role as activists or campaigners is to engage others in the topic
 - b. We are human beings and our own communication skills are a valuable tool.
 - c. When we really listen, and speak in a heartfelt way, sharing our own motivation, we can create a connection and rapport with the listener that can enable them to listen with a fresh perspective.
2. Ask the group to break into pairs and talk about what the topic means to them.
3. Encourage them to talk about
 - a. What brought them into this area
 - b. What parallel elements there are in their life
 - c. What elements of the situation moves them most
 - d. How they feel when they put themselves in other peoples shoes
 - e. What keeps them working on these issues
 - f. What impact they are committed to having
4. When they have identified some of the most meaningful elements for them, ask people to swap partners, and share their heartfelt feelings with another person. Ask the listener to consider
 - a. What is powerful about these revelations
 - b. How is the other person speaking that is engaging
 - c. What is the other person saying that is engaging

- d. How can they be even more engaging
5. Once each person feels that they have perfected their disclosure then suggest that people move around the room and share their perspective with as many people as possible, in order to become comfortable with this style of conversation.
6. Review the other tools and resources that are available on the everyonefoundation.org website, or speak to the team about what the next steps might be in this conversation by calling 0207 836 8142

It should be noted that when activists are working in the real world, they would move on from this personal disclosure once they have established a rapport with the listener... and share more facts, and stories, answer questions and enter into discussion...