



LISTENING PARTNERSHIP

Experiential education



N° of pax 2-50



indoors | outdoors



10-30 mins

group dynamics | challenge



PURPOSE

FINDING PERSONAL RESOURCES

- connection
- listening & witnessing
- recognizing and sharing thoughts and feelings

MATERIALS

- comfortable chairs/pillows
- timepiece (smartphone or watch)
- sound object (singing bowls, etc)

PREPARATION

- Quiet location, either a suitable room or a place in nature.
- Only brief participants carefully about what theme to choose, if they are not yet a well performing group - not to start with a deep, personal drama.

INTRO

* This is an activity of Listening partnerships, that can give a chance to learn from our experience and honour our own thoughts, feelings and goals.

* This activity is very simple and can be applied at any time in a course, or can be introduced in personal / work life.



STEPS

1. The facilitator divides the group into pairs. For the first trial each pair has 5-5 minutes to work together. For practicing they can choose a topic that is important but not their most serious personal drama (eg. divorce), but it should be more interesting than what they ate for dinner last night.

The facilitator emphasizes that the biggest gift we can give each other in our everyday life is to listen, our uninterrupted attention is a gift for the other. If we become aware that our focus wandered somewhere, recognize it and come back to listening. It is not easy not to react, this is the challenge for us as a witness/listener.

2. (5 min/ each) The first person starts to talk about anything they are busy with, even if then it's ok to shift to another theme that comes up within these 5 minutes, the point is just to talk, to share all the thoughts and emotions that are relevant here. The partner is focused on listening, and not to jump his/her thoughts relevant to the sharing, but instead just be with the other person and keep the space for listening. No judgement, questions and analysis is given by the listener, not even saying "yes" or "aha". The facilitator signals the end of 5 min and the partners exchange roles.

3. At this point, they can either stay with the same partner or they find a new one in the group. It is advisable to switch to someone else, so there is no story influence in the new round. The facilitator asks the new pair to shake themselves off a bit, to let go of what happened previously, and be available to start fresh in the new round.

4. (5 min/each) In the new round the other person has the challenge to talk for 5 minutes entirely about their topic and the other person's challenge is again to listen to it.

5. The facilitator gather everyone in a circle to share and reflect on the experience with the activity

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REFLECTION

- How was the experience with the different roles for you?
- What new insights/discoveries did you gain through this activity?
- How do you think this activity can contribute to resilience building?

COMMENTS

• Variation: The sharing can be longer up to 30 min each partner, 5 minutes is only an appetizer. There is a phenomenon that after 20 minutes, our conscious mind gets a bit tired very interesting themes (thoughts, emotions) emerge, that are usually very powerful sharing supporters. • Sometimes, if there is a nice atmosphere in the group, they can be physically connected, holding hands and facing each other. • Suggestion: you can invite participants to continue this activity in their workplace, family or circle of friends or to choose a supporting partner and meet them occasionally and see the results in the long run.