Cultivating Relational Capacities to Work Across Difference

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Follow-up Resources

1. **Body-based practices**

We have found the following kinds of practices to be helpful, at the beginning and during workshops, to let go of tiredness and stress that is carried in our bodies and to enable us to be more fully present. These practices, like muscles, become stronger the more they are used.

- *Shaking and Dancing*:

https://cmbm.org/shake-dance-and-heal/#:~:text=As%20we%20shake%20off%20tension,a%20healthy%20and%20cathartic%20way.

- *Breathing: practical guidance with science support*

https://oxygenadvantage.com/science/

(This site also includes a link to a very useful app to support the cultivation of new breathing habits:

https://oxygenadvantage.com/oa-breathing-app/)

2. **Making sure we are on the same 'PAGE'**

Another foundational capacity that applies to all relationships is to learn to work with our 'fight-flight-freeze-fawn' reactivity, i.e. to appreciate the neurophysiology of working across difference.

The following video uses the language of 'trauma', but the PAGE practice applies to any stressful situation/relationship too:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-876Zw-NA94&ab_channel=JacobHam

We also recommend watching this background input on the vital distinction between engaging across difference from our 'survival brain' vs our 'learning brain':

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KoqaUANGvpA&ab_channel=JacobHam

Both these videos draw attention to the importance of a trauma-informed approach to transformation.

For a very helpful application of insights from neuroscience to transformative education, we attach an article by an AVREQ associate, prof Mays Imad, on 'Trauma-informed Education for Wholeness'.

3. **Relational Capacities**

- On 'positional awareness' (linked to social identity and power dynamics)

https://www.queensu.ca/ctl/resources/equity-diversity-inclusivity/positionality-statement

https://www.equalityinstitute.org/blog/how-to-write-a-positionality-statement

- Introductory overview of multi-layered meaning of 'compassion', plus evidence-based practices

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/six_habits_of_highly_compassionate_people