



PYE Third Thursday Assembly

June 16, 2016

**\*Nilisha Mohapatra**

Hello, hello, hello, dear artists! Welcome to another exciting Third Thursday. We are so glad you're here, because today is PLAY DAY. That means we are just going to have fun with designing case-studies today. The format will be a little different today, where I'll be sharing scenarios with a few questions each. Together we will work towards exploring different elements of a workshop's experience, for those scenarios. Don't worry about being right or wrong or not knowing how ...

**\*Nilisha Mohapatra**

**GOALS:**

1. To explore some dynamic elements of workshop design, and how to create an experience.
2. To understand the role of the right kind of activities, and how they can change in response to the group.
3. To share our experiences and best practices.
4. To connect, reinvigorate and have meaningful fun online.

**AGREEMENTS:**

In order to achieve these, here are some suggestions for agreements to make our time together flow really well. Be sure to add what you need or want **AT ANY TIME DURING THE PROCESS**. Let the group know or privately message the facilitator if you are concerned that an agreement is being broken.



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- 1) No put downs of self or others. Keep a positive, lift-up vibe.
- 2) Share at your level; Everyone is welcome, no matter their level of experience as a facilitator or community organizer. All questions are important, and all answers (or further questions) are valuable. It is also okay and important to respectfully disagree with each other.
- 3) Show your presence, by LIKING and by responding to keep the flow. Ask questions, make comments, connect. The technical trick for this format is to REFRESH your browser fairly often.
- 4) Maintain CONFIDENTIALITY by not sharing names or personal information about the participants in your groups, sharing from your own perspective, and asking permission before sharing someone else's story.

\*[Nilisha Mohapatra](#)

CHECK-IN:

Tomorrow when you wake up, you have the choice to be something or someone completely different from who you are today. What or who would you be? Tell us why! Let your imagination run run run.

[Arindita Gogoi](#) I want to be a farmer!

[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) Yayyy! You sound excited 😊 Tell me more about it.



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[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) I want to be a penguin. There is something very serene about gathering rocks 😊

[Arindita Gogoi](#) I live in a big city and my grandparents were farmers. I have always wanted to explore how is it like to be in the farms; any chance of being closer to the soil and plants really uplift me a lot!

[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) Ah! it connects to your roots.

[Shilpa Setty](#) I want to be daaji, my spiritual guide. To be the person he is, always connected to his heart

[Nadia Chaney](#) A magician-artist from a planet that has already survived the phase we are in.

[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) Love it!!

[Amber Hescoock Johnson](#) Fantastic!

[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) Case Study 1 and it's first question are up.

[Amber Hescoock Johnson](#) A monk

[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) Tell me a little more 😊

[Amber Hescoock Johnson](#) A Buddhist monk in the mountains of Tibet living in keeping with one of the world's oldest traditions, life stripped down to its essentials, with peace as my anchor in this world.

<http://resources.touropia.com/.../amazing.../yumbulagang.jpg>



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[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) Stripped down to essentials. I think that's my phrase for the day.

[Barb Applepieski](#) A mother of many living in the forest connected deeply to the plant and animal spirits, speaking their language and telling their stories.

[Madhu Shukla](#) Tree by the river☺

[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) Love it.



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Case Study 1:

You are facilitating a two-day one on building skills of empathy, and taking compassionate action, with a group of 20 counselors. These counselors work with women who have been abused. Their role is to bring emotional, psychological and physical safety to them.

Q.1. These counselors have been doing their work for over a decade. What learning are you going to offer them in these two days?

[Arindita Gogoi](#) Woo! A tough one! I'd explore non-verbal methods of expression that can trade gently on the women who have seen so much noise and violence in their lives.

[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) You're on to something smile emoticon:) How would non-verbal help? What's the wisdom there?

[Arindita Gogoi](#) I have observed or learnt from friends who've worked with women who've experienced abuse is that many times there is so much chaos and fear that one is unable to pin point what has been the impact of that abuse/violence - is it fear, loss of trust, indecisiveness, remorse, anger, hatred...one cannot imagine conversations alone being instrumental in reaching to the core of it. Art, for example sometimes helps in reaching out to the subconscious. Not being an expert on the matter, I can only share what once I learnt from an art therapy workshop. The facilitator had asked us to work with clay - as a psycho-motor stimulant. Giving space and time to create and express and most importantly be with oneself.

[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) Beautiful! I agree that holistic change happens when all of body, mind and soul are engaged.



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[Amber Hescocock Johnson](#) I would ask them why they are at the workshop--it might reveal what type of support you can provide. It would probably entail creative approaches to creating safety.

[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) Intentions! Any thoughts on how you would bridge everyone's intentions? Or how would you help them own their intentions?

[Arindita Gogoi](#) I completely agree with Amber. The workshop would certainly start with why they feel the need to be in this workshop - what are their expectations from us, intentions.

[Arindita Gogoi](#) Nilisha Mohapatra I would want to know about the challenges they face. And request them to build their intentions keeping that in mind.

[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) Arindita Gogoi YES! Maybe even make an intention tree of the group, where they each write their intentions down.

[Arindita Gogoi](#) Nilisha Mohapatra Absolutely! This is something we practice regularly; to create intention trees and intention walls, intention prayer flags, where the intentions written down are clearly displayed and visible throughout the workshop.

[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) That's amazing. I'd love to try out intention prayer flags sometime. Maybe make one for myself today.

[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) I was thinking about exploring the whole concept of safety.. and how subjective it can be... delving into the different layers of needs, wants, hopes, fears..

[Arindita Gogoi](#) I think the first layer of safety comes where one feels that they're not being judged, will be heard and will be assisted to feel stronger and better.

[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) And a lot of it is non-verbal, I'd imagine. Energy, the physical space etc.



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[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) Here, I'm also curious about teaching self-care. Like deep levels of it.. of thought awareness.. knowing when we are being stretched, knowing when to step back and drawing boundaries. I believe it is always a challenge.

[Arindita Gogoi](#) The biggest challenges I have seen in counsellors is truly the concept of self-care. I've seen it in even the most experienced of counsellors. This could be a very strong point...daily practices of self care, boundaries and detaching from the stories in a way that one is enriched but not emotionally pushed to the wall.

[Barb Applepieski](#) Agreed: playing with non-verbal communication: listening, embodied movement. And self care. I don't know what activities I would plan to do but I like what others have said!

\*[Nilisha Mohapatra](#)

Case Study 1: You are facilitating a two-day one on building skills of empathy, and taking compassionate action, with a group of 20 counselors. These counselors work with women who have been abused. Their role is to bring emotional, psychological and physical safety to them.

QUESTION 2:

Give us an example of one activity, that according to you is a non-negotiable for training the counselors. Make a case for it!

[Arindita Gogoi](#) Is there an activity that helps counsellors understand how to be non-patronizing?



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[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) Very interesting line of thought. I'm not aware of it, but I'm sure some research will help. I understand non-patronizing is about seeing the person as a whole, meeting them where they are at, without assumptions, with a willingness to listen. Right?

[Arindita Gogoi](#) Nilisha Mohapatra Yes, empathy and kindness, without the show of superiority.

[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) I'm reminded of the Heart Circles that Nadia Chaney facilitates. Where one person sits in the center of the circle and share for a full 30 mins the story of their life. Everyone else is a witness to it. These circles always had the intent of allowing the person to own the story.. so no comforting hugs after the circle or no passing around tissues. Just a real moment of being seen and heard for all that we are.

[Shilpa Setty](#) I was so thinking of it (Heart circles), didnt know what it was called, that will be perfect

[Nadia Chaney](#) Heart Circle is a sacred form that was gifted to the power of hope camps directly and are a little different in protocol from what you describe above. But those story telling circles ARE a powerful way to develop deep listening and empathy.

[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) Nadia Chaney Thanks for adding to this thread. Really helps to know the context.

[Arindita Gogoi](#) Nadia Chaney Yes, I do remember the protocol of Heart Circle from Power of Hope camps, and also the immense power it held; it broke open so many of us, and it was really intense. Our Lead Facilitators were very specific in explaining how the Sacred Ritual was gifted to Power of Hope. I actually have learnt this practice of acknowledgment from Power of Hope...every time a song is sung, a game is played, I have now started telling the group about the origin and how I learned it, and found the reception and acceptance to be much stronger ever since.

[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) Anything with music or theater?





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[Shilpa Setty](#) I feel 'River of life' at a deeper level. Where we can practice listening the story of the other person as is, and how each and everything that happens has immense value to that person

[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) Always a great choice. The art element of it is powerful too.

[Shilpa Setty](#) I was so thinking of it (Heart circles), didnt know what it was called, that will be perfect

[Arindita Gogoi](#) Heart Circles are tricky; they need to be used with caution I believe because people really express their deep vulnerabilities. The facilitator must understand where the group is at at that time and whether the overall workshop design allows for people to de-stress from the Heart Circle experience.

[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) True that.

[Madhu Shukla](#) I would use a role reversal activity from psychodrama. You experience speaking as another role of yours or as someone in your life living or not

[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) Tell me more 😊

[Madhu Shukla](#) There are many ways one can do this

In a large group or in pairs. You speak and respond as someone else from your life. And when you step out you can reflect on what it meant to be them. A simple way to experience empathy for the other for the self.



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And here is third question for Case Study 1:

QUESTION 3: During the workshop, a lot of the discussions get emotionally charged and contain information that is sensitive. How do you close these sessions?

[Amber Hescoc Johnson](#) Maybe refer back to the agreed upon goals to steer things back in line with them?

[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) That's a great way to ensure confidentiality, and safety. What else would bring closure to a discussion? More like a healing, whole energy?

[Shilpa Setty](#) One way to close could be to ask everyone to take a deep breath, and close with some quite time where everyone are just completely there for each other

[Nilisha Mohapatra](#) I love the stillness that brings. I'd also love to follow this up with a soft song.

[Shilpa Setty](#) Where they feel each other in silence

[Shilpa Setty](#) Sure thing Nilisha Mohapatra

[Madhu Shukla](#) Sing together. Learn a simple song together . Sway and sing and hold.



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## CASE STUDY 2:

A non-profit organization is undergoing a whole range of changes, right from a new management, to location, and team restructuring. The morale of the team is low, and there is a lot of confusion around what is happening. You have been invited to facilitate a 5-day residential retreat for 35 people. The intent is for you to rebuild the team, open lines of communication and support them in establishing a culture that is aligned with the change.

QUESTION 1: What makes the design of this 5-day residential retreat, different one or two day workshops?

[Neha Parti](#) With a 5 days residential retreat I think there would be more opportunities for trust building to happen... One can take more time to build the community and building safe spaces as a result of which conflicts can be openly discussed. And the fact that it's residential can give you more informal spaces of interaction as well which one can build on.

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QUESTION 2: What do you believe this group needs to do or experience, to achieve their goal?

[Arindita Gogoi](#) Woo! I like this! Organizational behaviour and management. I think one big thing is to redefine or reminder of the collective vision and mission of the Organisation. And important to identify the values that define the functioning of the Organisation.

\*[Nilisha Mohapatra](#)

Okay dear assemblers.. Thank you for a fun and exciting session! I so appreciate your wisdom and willingness to play. I am in awe. I will share the rest of the case studies if you want to play more! Have a great day ahead. And thank you once again 😊

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QUESTION 3: What is the importance of the last day of this training? How are you going to weave together all their experience?

### Nilisha Mohapatra

#### Case Study 3:

You are facilitating a series of four one-day workshop for high school teachers, on 'Building Spontaneity and Creative Confidence'. The ultimate goal is for the school to have a culture of participation, ideation and initiative, for staff, students and their parents. They admit it is an ambitious one!

1. How would you want the group to grow through the four workshops?
2. What do you need to keep in mind to design the first workshop? How will the last workshop differ?
3. A challenge we face during such a series, is the stickiness of learning, in-between trainings. And these workshops are two weeks apart. How can the design address that?
4. What are some of your favorite activities for building creative confidence?



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[Neha Parti](#) I would want the group to be at a stage where they are able to start designing their own experiences to achieve the larger goal of participation within the school. I would definitely focus on a lot of small small creative activities as part of the first workshop which would focus on breaking the groups inhibitions and getting them to take creative challenges. In between the workshops would also focus on reflecting on their context, the different stakeholders the perceptions they have about them in order to identify the positives and the changes they need to focus on. Some activities which I really like are getting participants to design their own name tags. Another one is creating images with thumb impressions. One of my favorites is to get small groups to design a machine which has not been invented yet with waste material. To ensure that participants don't lose the flow in between trainings some small project based activities can be designed which they have to do in smaller teams - like observe small children around them and note what they thought was creative in them. Or making a stakeholder map of their school.