



Inventing New Workshop Activities

3rd Third Thursday Assembly

Related: Quotes:

“Design is not just what it looks like and feels like. Design is how it works.”

Steve Jobs

“Design works if it's authentic, inspired, and has a clear point of view. It can't be a collection of input.”

Ron Johnson

Transcript:

The below conversation took place on FACEBOOK on March 20th 2014.

Nadia Chaney: Check-in Question for March 20, 2014: Imagine the way you feel today was a tree. Describe its shape, colour, size and any special features.

Katie Jackson: My tree would be tall with long branches that sway in the wind and with small birds flitting about through them.

SxEd Jodi Bernstein: Today I am a pink flowering Dogwood, buds just beginning to open, warmed by the strengthening spring sun.

Autumn Preble: I'm an early flowering plum with little soft pink blossoms, a little vulnerable to the north wind that blew through yesterday evening, but trusting my perennial nature to always be there as a sign of the beginning of spring.

Shalini Menon: I feel like a pine tree found in the hilly regions up north of India. It stand's tall, spreading its pine cones and needles far and wide. Also, most of my friends are in the hills right now... so I am just missing the mountains since the last few days!

Maximilian Fyfe: My tree is in great blossoming! Reaching deep into the soil and stretching far into the skies. Though it is in the midst of the changing winds and creaking, it is swaying, flowing and staying flexible. Ready for a new spring.

Nakinti Besumbu Nofuru: I will feel like a palm tree whose fruits are used to make oil, branches used for firewood, leaves used to make broom to sweep the house...yes, I am feeling like a palm tree.

Nadia: Welcome all! My tree is strong and wide at the base, with big thick ropey roots, and up near the top it is covered in gorgeous, delicate orange flowers. A family of birds lives here, many generations of them.

Becky Jaïne: I am willow: grounded, wise, recovering from a deep wounding, healing ready to spurt new growth and be shade and shelter and muse to those who choose to sit with me.

Gretchen Wegner: I am a Joshua tree. Prickly, sturdy, with lots of strangle little bumps and sharp stickers. (I have a bit of a headache and that's the tree that came to me! I kind of like it).

Julia Pond: I'm a slender silver birch, with green leaves reaching for the sun. (hey there!)

Jodi: I am digging how diverse our trees are, and might even reflect the geographical place we are connected from.

Wilson Mendes: Feeling like the midsummer chubby midsize orange tree in its full bearing cycle. It's completely happily overwhelmed with the amount of brown-orange coloured fruits hanging low to the ground. It welcomes anyone to harvest its golden oranges but be aware of its sharp green needles

Joanne Lauterjung Kelly: I'm a redwood tree - tall, strong, standing in community with my roots reaching out for others to connect with.

Roshini Bolar: I feel like a blue spruce, not too big, not too tall- just being. Not in a forest with other spruces. A little singled out. I am beautiful and healthy and others appreciate me, but don't hang around too long. I love my colour and vibe and know I am worthwhile- but deep down I have been fearful and judgmental that I was not?

Arindita Gogoi: I am a cherry tree in full blossom. I guess that's what my state of mind is currently...happy and light and blooming!

Nadia Chaney: Goals for March 20, 2014 Assembly:

Today's session is about **DESIGNING ACTIVITIES**. Please read the goals below and ask any questions you may have.

- 1) To explore the how/when and why to **CREATE NEW ACTIVITIES**. What are the principles, practices and tools that we can use to create activities that work, what are the best ways to test them, what are the elements of great activities, and when should we **NOT** create new activities in facilitation.
- 2) To use case studies (examples) to create three new activities together.
- 3) To share our experiences of trying new activities so that we can learn from each other's successes and challenges.
- 4) To connect, reinvigorate and have meaningful fun online

In order to achieve these goals, here are some suggestions for agreements to make our time together flow really well. We are still experimenting with this form, so be sure to add what you need or want **AT ANY TIME DURING THE PROCESS**.

- 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) Answer any questions in the **COMMENTS** below the question to keep the conversation organized and readable. Only open **NEW** questions in new threads.
- 5) You can come and go as you please, take as long as you like to respond, and basically enjoy the text-format to make this work

no matter whether you are just waking up, just going to bed, or on your lunch break (time zones unite!!) Feel free to continue the conversation even after the 90 minute period has ended.

Nadia: Discussion Question #1: What are the basic elements of tried-and-true activities that work very well?

Gretchen Wegner: Easy to explain. Easy to follow. Each incremental step in the activity is fun and doesn't seem too threatening, so as a participant you feel comfortable jumping right in. Something is funny and you laugh. The challenge is built up incrementally enough so that, when it hits, you feel ok about giving it a try.

Becky Jaine: they take us into ourselves so much we forget ourselves and get in flow...and if it's really good, big emotions come out ... laughter, tears, silence (aka presence).

Nadia Chaney: yes! great answers Gretchen and Becky. Let's keep this thread growing and refer to it in the case studies I will be posting in just a few minutes.

Shalini Menon: Crisp, simple instructions, appropriate challenge levels and offers an invitation...

Julia Pond: Clear intention, less is more, and an element of creative risk...an open playing field and/or blank page that lets people really bring their own ideas and creativity.

Joanne Lauterjung Kelly: I agree with everything said. Just want to add: setting the tone by having participants create their own agreements that honor different learning styles and frame the experience as a process of discovery.

Roshini Bolar: Good one Joanne! I have been thinking about different learning styles and how we can facilitate to best honour the individual.

Wilson Mendes: Along the same line as Shalini's approach, and I will add F.U.N to the mix.

Becky: F.U.N.? abbrev for something? (I fun)

Shalini: Karl Rohnle coined this and I love it and use it - Functional understanding necessary and functional understanding not necessary! FUN & FUNN

Roshini: Using metaphors (like we just did with the tree) to have people open up and express themselves in a revealing, playful, creative and non direct kind of way. It's a safe way to be open and vulnerable and be seen deeper within the group. Metaphors can also give a broader perspective through images and tone that can be lost or limited when we use direct, left brained communication.

Yes, fun. WHO doesn't like to have fun?? Especially with a serious topic. How to play with it in a way that is still learning, revealing and meaningful.

Activities that encourage body language as a means of expression to show more to ones communication an reveal more depth than just using words. Also focusing on different senses, be it sound, movement, visual etc to bring in the right brained creative side

wisdom and expression. Both these styles will also encourage the sub-conscious to reveal it self, adding more depth to both the participant and group.

Nadia: Discussion Question #2: What are some of the challenges to be aware of when creating and delivering new activities? What have you learned from your experiments?

Becky Jaime: not to take myself too seriously, be honest about trying this for the first time and be willing to take the risks I'm asking of others. Also, the challenges are that people won't play if they don't trust the process or the activity "leader".

Gretchen Wegner: I haven't worked with large groups of teens in a while, as these days I'm coaching them 1:1. However, My biggest challenge (even in my 1:1 work) is being committed to what I'm leading. If I feel shy or confused about what I'm doing, it doesn't work. So when I'm trying new things, I have to forge forward as if I know what I'm doing, so that I exude confidence. Then, if something doesn't work, don't get flustered but just laugh with it and re-orient.

Becky, I love that our answers could be seen as opposites, but I don't think they are. There is a certain confidence to saying, "I'm trying this for the first time, I really believe in the idea. Let's see how it goes!"

Becky: Gretchen love that ... yes, we must "act like we know what the heck we are doing" even if we don't in order to move toward intention.

SxEd Jodi Bernstein: It is important to be sensitive to any physical disabilities or injuries anyone in the group might be experiencing.

Gretchen and Becky, I do think both of your statements are very true. There is a way to be super silly with confidence!

Julia Pond: Be ready to shift subtly if it's not working, and to be creative in the moment. Be transparent that you're doing it for the first time. (Sola and I recently co-led the song [Somagwaza](#) at a training for the first time - neither of us are innate singers - and flagging that creative risk to the group felt like a big help!)

Also, get out of your own perspective. A question that might be a no-brainer to you could be really delicate for someone else! This came up for me designing discussion questions for a women's/girl's circle at camp last year...

Becky: Julia, what were discussion questions that were challenging for you?

Julia: Becky it wasn't so much for me - but I had to realize that the question 'name a woman who inspires you' could be really sensitive in a group where some of the young people (and maybe adults!) might not have one!

Nadia: Julia, sometimes when I ask that question I say: it can be someone from your life, or even a public person you admire

Becky: Just listened to Somagwaza, so beautiful I'm crying. RIP dear Pete, your starlight shines on.

Shalini Menon: A facilitator can demonstrate her vulnerability. I have often found great support when I share with my group, "I haven't tried this in a long time, but am excited to see how it goes or I haven't done this in a large group, but I sense great energy here. So lets do this! You guys with me?"... I often find a lot of support instantly and enthusiasm! If it's the first time, I also do a lot of prep work by rehearsing it with my co facilitator and visualising each step.

Arindita Gogoi: It is essential to understand the scope of digression - both content wise and sentiment wise, from the topic. It is better to be able to anticipate that and be prepared with tools to bring back the focus...especially if we are short of time.

Nadia Chaney: Discussion Question #3: Describe an activity you created. What was your process of creating? How did the activity evolve? What was the response?

Becky Jaine: I created playshops for tween girls and adult women. Many women have not done anything they consider creative since they were girls. I held a playshop, offered talking circle before creative time, issued everyone their small --and possibly intimidating--blank art canvas). Before getting to painting, I asked everyone to treat their canvas like a drum and we had an impromptu drum circle session, everyone bonding with this object, turning it into expressive extension of themselves. We played for 5 mins (couldn't stop them) and the joy that was in the room ... and fearlessness that emerged co-created to a powerful creative space. I'd never "led" a drum circle before ... but I trusted my instincts to inspire playfulness with the group. I will never forget this (and can't wait to inspire a drum circle WITH drums) teehee (ETA the canvases have better bounce for painting AND drumming if you spritz the back with water and let it dry, shrinks a little and makes great drum sound)

Nadia: ha! That is awesome Becky! I love the multi-arts approach!

Julia Pond: My favorite activity I developed is a workshop called Dance/Paint that uses building blocks of movement theory (basic movement qualities) to create a giant painting on a wall-floor. The paint becomes a record of the movement. It was actually kind of systematic to develop - I collaborated with a visual artist - we hashed out what we wanted to do and how we could support that through a warm-up and moving through to bigger challenges. The reception has been great in general - most teenagers haven't ever really tried to think about movement that way, and the combo of movement and painting means people are less self-conscious about both.

Becky: Julia I want to come!!!! Sounds awesome!

Nadia: My favorite activity I created was at my first [Power of Hope](#) camp. It was called Word Emancipation. We described things that "had no name"...emotions, parts of the body, relationships...and then made up gibberish words and paired them up (randomly) and then practiced using them. It was always a blast.

Joanne Lauterjung Kelly: I just finished designing and piloting a resilience workshop here in Myanmar, and one of my favorite activities was using the shape of a palm leaf to talk about identity. Participants write down all their identities in the "points" of the palm frond, completing the sentence, "I am . . ." There are multiple steps to using this model, but the end is talking about the big, broad area at the base as the "human corner". We put the fronds together, meeting in the "human corner". You can later use your hand to refer back to the exercise. Creating this was a happy accident with a co-worker. My favorite way to come up with activities is to collaborate, and give myself freedom to think way outside the box.

Julia: Nadia that sounds amazing. Ditto Joanne.

SxEd Jodi Bernstein: All of these sound amazing.

Becky: I LOVE all your ideas. I'm so grateful to have this forum to learn from you.

Shalini Menon: My client asked me to address 'perceptions'... how a staff member could say one thing and be interpreted another way by the team... so I googled for the Perception pyramid, asked my client to state some of the real life example of these challenges - actions/behaviours/attitude - then I build scenarios around them. Using a rope, I built the same perception pyramid and did some role playing... it was the first time and Bopannah was my facilitator. We had, of course, rehearsed it together.

Becky: Shalini wow! Great idea! How did you use the rope? The work I do with young girls ... this would be great to do with them as we talk about media homogenization of girls and women and what is so called "perfect".

Arindita Gogoi: Hey Shalini! I will certainly explore this tool during my training on communication perceptions. Thanks!

Nadia Chaney: Here is the first case study. Please work together by saying YES to ideas and building together...there is a wide diversity of experience here today...but also don't be afraid to offer ideas that you aren't sure about. We are here to learn together.

Case Study #1: You are facilitating a group of 15 young people ages 14-18 who go to the same school, but do not know each other. You have been asked to offer a poetry exercise. There is one student who does not speak the same language as the others, and there is one student who the teacher has told you does not like to write or read. What activity can you offer that will be fun and meaningful for all the students?

Becky Jaine: Woh, toughy. Instructions: poetry without words, so no words allowed. Use pictures (cut out from magazines/collaging, markers) to create an image poem, expressing who you are.

Nadia: NICE ONE Becky!! Way to think outside the box (page)

Maximilian Fyfe: I have developed what I call 'The Universal Singing Language', which I would definitely try to start off with in this context. It is basically that you start singing and in your mind think of random letters and so that you end up singing a random, meaningless phrase. ('wha-ya-saya-mapa-wooo for instance!) I would offer in a gesture, to the more confident individuals a call and response and then focus on a rhythm of that call and response and encourage the rest of the group to join in so that the whole group is happy to participate in this random call and response. Then, observe that interaction and evolve the 'poem' through more call and response. I have seen a very timid individual come out with stomping feet, proclaiming their being with foot stomps and fists in the air - it felt very tribal...The Universal Singing Language!

Katie Jackson: Nice Maximilian - great idea

Nadia: This is wonderful Maximilian. And...I would love to see it combined with Becky's idea above...singing the images...

Joanne Lauterjung Kelly: I use a lot of collage, and I like Becky's suggestion. Could be a multi-media piece. I've done the group poem exercise with mixed languages and it's always worked well.

Katie: We have a few [creative writing exercises](#) on the PYE website that could come in useful for something like this. Joanne - your comment reminded me of [this one](#). There is also [this one](#).

Julia Pond: There's also the pass-around poem - a good way to take some of the heat off people who don't like writing. You could do one with images and allow words in different languages.

Shalini Menon: This often happens in a country like India, where we run into 1000's of languages. The challenge is when only a few people are 'comfortable in English, which means read, write and get creative with it' ... Poetry in itself may not be an easy task for some like me. My briefing would be more like - As a team, you need to create a poem. It can be about anything around you. What is important is each one of you must be involved in the process. Get creative and talk to each other about what and how each one of you would like to contribute in the creation of this poem. You can use action, words, sounds, metaphors, even body movements - as

a facilitator, then, I have invited them, given them many ways to get involved but left it open for them to choose how they will engage themselves in a task.

Gretchen Wegner: How about having each participant write one word or phrase, large on a piece of paper. The words can be real or gibberish. Then put them together in different ways, like magnetic poetry. Play with the sounds of the words, so that the meaning isn't as important as the lyrical quality of saying the word. Play with different combinations of words together, read them outloud, and enjoy how they sound.

Wilson Mendes: I really like the ideas provided specifically the collage and singing ideas. I would approach it by firstly learning a bit about the participants cultural background, then I would bring to the space old magazines/ songs/ musical instruments that have some cultural relevance to the cultural diversity in the space...

Nadia: these are amazing answers. I'm doing a workshop tomorrow for the International Day for the Elimination of Racism...I'm going to use some of these!

Joanne: I wasn't able to get to the links you posted, Nadia - was one of them the metaphor exercise with the "free" write? I learned it from Power of Hope and what I love about it is that people don't know they're writing a poem until the very end. I used this recently working with metaphors for resilience. One group chose to free write about clouds, and the descriptions were so beautiful and perfect for resilience.

Devon Little: I'm more than fashionably late to this party, but so happy to be here and to be reading your wonderful answers! This is a question that I'm particularly interested in. I was trying to think of ways to tell or make stories where language can be fluid. Another couple ideas: definitely like the idea of freeing the voice without using words (using gibberish) from another post, doing copy cat stuff, or pass-around the circle, starting with a leader who offers a simple word of "gibberish" and each sequential person embellishes it as it goes around the circle.

In terms of other group activities, a thought is perhaps doing two versions of Pictionary Telephone - starting to tell stories together through pictures, by doing the picture pass around where each picture keeps getting added to/changed as it moves around, possibly as a linear cartoon story of sorts - and then moving into the picture-sentence version, where you start with a sentence about anything (and in any language), and the next person does their best to draw a picture about it, and then folds back the sentence so it can't be seen and the next person will only see the picture, which they will interpret through a sentence... I've never tried this with different languages, so I'm not sure how it would affect the outcome. Either way, the important thing is to tell folks that they can interpret a sentence or picture any way they want, no right or wrong.

Becky: Joanne and all, makes me think of Lewis Carroll's brilliant [Jabberwocky](#):

`Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.....

Roshini Bolal: I would give them a topic to base their short poem on. Then I would ask the participants to choose a medium of their choice. It could be words, images, sounds or body gestures. They could combine mediums together too. I would encourage them to have fun with it, not take it too seriously (no competition or judgment) but to do their best to make it exciting and meaningful to them with feeling. Then, only if they felt comfortable, to share their piece with the whole group.

Nadia: Case Study #2 (answer in any order...I know this is a lot to read...but you are all doing so great. Totally inspired by you right now!):

You are facilitating (hosting/emceeing) a conference of 200 people who are going to spend the next week together in a process of learning and giving each other feedback on their work. They do not all know each other, and most have come to the conference in small groups. What kind of ice breaker activity can you create to have them all a) moving their bodies b) connecting with people they don't know and c) laughing and having fun?

Becky Jaine: Shalini posted a great one last week ... [here it is](#)

Maximilian Fyfe: definitely stick some harmonising in there somewhere... 200 voices harmonising is a great feeling of unity.

Nadia: Niiice Maximilian. When you facilitate, how do you get people who may not all be comfortable singing to open their voices?

Gretchen Wegner: Nadia I don't know what Maximilian would say to your question about how to get people comfortable who don't usually like to sing, but here's what I do: we play around with all kinds of ways of making sounds. "I'll make a tone and you try and copy that tone. Great. Now I'll make a tone and you make a different tone than I'm making. Good. Now, make a quick sound that sounds like singing. Awesome. Now make a quick sound that doesn't sound like singing. awesome." etc etc At the end of all that, we play with all those ingredients. It sounds like mayhem at first, but once people are more comfortable just going for it, then I add layers of listening to each other, copying people around you, etc etc.

Maximilian: Nadia, I've found that if I sing loudly and embarrassingly it becomes funny and that's easier to vibe with. And also just doing a simple tone, people can do it as quietly and softly as they like before we all get louder together.

Joanne Lauterjung Kelly: With a group like this, I like to start with concentric circles and timed sharing, and then move to theater games. There's also a great singing game from Liberia where people spell their names called, "tosa, tosa".

Katie: If you have any audio of tosa tosa that you would be happy to share Joanne we can host it in the [song sharing section](#) of our website. My email address is katie@pyeglobal.org. Feel free to get in touch if you have any audio recordings.

Nadia: I love the concentric circle sharing, personally...do you ever find the noise level a problem in a big group?

Joanne: Nadia, as for noise level, sometimes it can get raucous, but that's part of bringing people out of their shell. I usually have some kind of sound to signal time's up, like a singing bowl or bell.

Nadia: Sometimes I remind them to start every conversation by whispering, so that the noise level builds from zero everytime.

Gretchen: Here's a blog entry I wrote years ago about the InterPlay form of "[Babbling](#)." It's not rocket science, by any means. What I love here is the idea that instant community is made when three people in the group (no matter what the size) gets to "know and be known by" three others in the group. To get people laughing, I ALWAYS turn to giving them a fake word (e.g. toolaneema) and telling them to pretend that they are the EXPERT on that word, and they are going to tell their partner all about it.

Nadia: hahahaha! Gretchen that is too funny

Joanne: Gretchen, I love working with gibberish. People here in Myanmar have a very difficult time expressing emotions, but jibberish opens the door to a lot more expression.

Gretchen: Joanne How cool is that!! Someone could write a wonderful research paper about the fabulousness of gibberish for expressing ourselves and connecting to each other.

Jodi: Some version of "Cover the Space" with interesting and carefully designed sociometry built in - such as circle up by shoe type, by what kind of tree you feel like today, an introversion/extroversion line-up, It would be fun to create a long list of possible activities to insert in this game so that a facilitator could pick the ones that best suited the mood and inclination and spirit of the group.

Shalini: A game called Tsunami, I learnt it in a Play for Peace workshop a game designed by children impacted by Tsunami. Some of you might know this as 'House, Tenant and Chaos.' Its easy instructions, makes people move around, find new partners and needs subtle hand contact!

Gretchen: Shalini Thanks for reminding us about subtle contact.

Shalini: I have recently moved away from using the name Tsunami... because I don't know if it's upsetting anyone. So I call it House, Tenant and Chaos

Nadia: Shalini I don't know that one. Is it a physical game? It reminds me of "disaster" which is a really deep process exercise, but it can't be the same one

Shalini: This one is just an ice-breaker... You first ask 100 people to pair up, find a partner, stand facing each other... making a shelter with their hands.... So that's 50 houses, then you say each house can have as many tenants and must have a minimum of 1 tenant. When I say house, the house moves and finds new tenants. When I say tenants, tenants must move and find a new house.... and occasionally, I would say Tsunami/chaos... which means everyone runs and takes up new roles of house and tenants

Nadia: Okay good people, here's the final case study (this is so FUN)

Case Study #3: You are at the end of a very profound week-long arts-based camp for a diverse group of young people ages 14-18. Many of them have been to camp before and you want to offer a closing activity they haven't done before. What activity can you create to give them a sense of closure and send them home feeling energized and empowered?

Becky Jaine: I'm really excited to see what y'all come up with here. Supplies: colored paper and envelopes, Write a letter and envelope to their future selves including things and feelings they want to remember from the experience. Give to facilitator who mails it to them in 6 months. (For a real mix, have them pass the letters (privately) around the circle and then when facilitator says stop, whatever letter you have, you stick in YOUR envelope and mail the letter in your hand (not knowing WHOSE it is) to yourself.

Nadia: oh I like that twist on letter-to-yourself Becky

Gretchen Wegner: Wow. Interesting, Becky! Another idea could be to have them write a letter of support and encouragement to someone else in the group...and then have them mail that letter to themselves. (I find that I often am more supportive and encouraging of others than I am of myself, so this would be powerful for me).

Julia Pond: Jeez, a profound week-long arts-based camp for teens sounds like a great idea! Somebody should totally do that. Anyway - some variation on the spider web? You pass a giant ball of yarn criss-crossed around the circle (or just around the circle) as people do their checkouts. People get to keep a bit of string to tie around their wrist as a reminder. It's a nice metaphor for connection!

Autumn Preble: Gather in others who would also be interested in planning the closing, and perhaps especially facilitating the leadership of those who have been to camp before to step forward and help with it . . . it seems mostly to do with tuning into some of the profound moments of the previous days and designing something very simple that includes something they can take home with them to remind them of what they have just been through . . .

Maximilian Fyfe: I like this one, a free-writing exercise called 'future-base' so ask them to imagine themselves in the future at some point and write in the present tense about where they're at and also can use past-tense to explore how they got there.

Joanne Lauterjung Kelly: I love these ideas! What I did recently, working with the staff of an organization that's done lots of workshops together, I had a ritual section and had them create their own closing. It had some parameters and had to include certain elements. What they came up with was beautiful, and they want to use it for future events.

Maximilian Fyfe: Joanne that sounds great! What did they come up with? In a nut shell...

Joanne: It had two components. First, people wrote their name on a colored piece of paper, and then everyone went around and wrote what they thought that person's strength is on their paper so people had a take-away and reminder of how others see them positively. Then we stood in a circle and silently lit candles by passing the light from one person to another. The "emcee" gave a little talk, and then one by one people put their candles on a tray to represent our combined light, burning brighter than any individual light. This is a variation of another ritual they'd done before, but has great meaning for them.


Becky: Joanne wow, when did you set the intention with the group to create the closing, at the beginning of the time together, or on last day? Just curious. this is really powerful.

Joanne: I designed the workshop with the ritual element in mind, but didn't tell the participants until the last day. They had around 1.5 hours to create the closing and were given some guidelines and suggestions. I didn't want to tell them too far in advance so they wouldn't stress about it. Sometimes having less time frees people up from feeling like it has to be "perfect".

Maximilian Fyfe: sounds lovely. and reminds me of a similar thing using post-its or sticky notes. at the end of a year long education programme, we all went around writing single words, I think the focus was just what we thought of them - and sticking them on each other. At the end we all had colourful notes all over us which was fun and we could keep these notes which was also a good reminder to take home. a couple of them still stick with me because of that profound journey we went on together being summed up in a few simple words from our new friends.

Shalini Menon: A bead ceremony: everyone sits in a circle. The facilitator gives a thread (just enough to be worn around one's wrist or neck) and 2 beads. One bead is for the self, and the other bead is a gift to someone you want to appreciate in the circle. Everyone gets a chance. So you stand up, and say ' I gift myself this bead to appreciate myself for... and (walking up to the person)... I appreciate you for... Thank them and hand over the bead! Sometimes one person will get a lot of beads... I am comfortable with that for it says this person has been found supportive by most people and gets people to recall what actions/behaviour/attitude did they demonstrate to receive so many appreciations... I do intervene sometimes, to say 'lets try to go to new faces and people' and shift the focus from one person.

Nadia: Okay good people. This has been a most incredible discussion. Thank you for your wisdom, experience, compassion and all your hard work and big love in the world. Our next month's topic is: BEST PRACTICES IN CO-FACILITATION and we would be delighted to see you again.



Roshini: Thank you Nadia, Katie, PYE and others who have contributed in this assembly, for us to share and learn the art of facilitation from each other. I've been looking for something like this for a while and the timing is perfect for me.