**L’Arche USA Learning/Reflection Session**

Creating Inclusive Space for Stories

**Name of Engagement**:

**Basic description:** Participants will learn – through visuals, presentation and practice - about some perspectives, preparations and practices that help creative inclusive space for story sharing, particularly for people w I/DD.

**Intended Learners / Reflectors** (and note any particular needs): Assistants, Leaders

* What prep materials, reflection questions or activities are needed ahead for participants and facilitators?
* How will you set up the space?
* What resources of material and people are needed and who is responsible for them?
* What focal layout, visuals or props will invite and ground participants?
* How and when will you evaluate?

Be sure the activities will offer variety of engagements and clear questions. Invite people to review the presentation materials ahead and consider how the materials might support their role and membership.

**Length of Time for Engagement:** 1.5 hour

**Key learnings / understandings / skills practice from the engagement:**

* Consider the perspective and culture of person with I/DD in preparation for sitting down with them to hear their story.
* Learn preparations around consent and environment that help in story gathering
* Learn about and practice ways of setting topic, consent and note-taking that encourage storytelling.

**Preparation**

* Pre-session preparation:
* Consider how you will introduce this topic of creating inclusive space for stories – get people thinking about the how and why of it.
* Plan how you will send people into interview pairs – count off, proximity, something else.
* Have all your materials
* Consider readers for a quote and make sure you have print outs of anything to be read.
* Since the theme is story, consider inviting people to bring scrap books or photo albums along.
* Send [Creating Inclusive Space Presentation](https://archive.larcheusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/MD-1910-LdrForm-CreateInclusiveSpace-STR-191118.pdf) Slides to participants ahead to review.
* Materials:
* Focal table or space: Cloth, candle or other sacred object; books or other symbol of story
* At least one set of inclusion tools and some markers, etc. on hand.
* Index Cards with “One Big Idea” words written on them (see below). Examples: Friendship, Home, Travel, Choice, God, Family, Love, Work… You can also use word suitcase word cards.
* Microphone: a good way of giving people the floor and amplifying all voices in the large group.
* Session Set-up:
* Set up room: prep for both a large circle with projector and make sure people can split into pairs with writing surface for themselves.
* Set up Focal Space, inclusion tools, art supplies. Make sure everyone has easy access to all spaces.
* Each person will need paper and markers/crayon for the interviewing activity.
* Print/Tech: cue up video, speaker, projector; test out mic.

**Activities**

* Encounter
  + Framing / Grounding Activity *Time:* 15 min

1. Introductions, if they are needed
2. Introduce idea of creating inclusive space for story. Possibility: Show [Google Larry](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HfIIYAvOzAY) or another video where a core member is sharing their story. Discuss in large group – they shared - how do we imagine space was created for them to share? (10 min)

* Engagement
* Learning Content: Time: 15 min
  + Facilitator presents slides on creating space – connect to experience and/or video
* Learning Activity: Inclusive Interview Time: 50 min

1. Invite people into pairs. Each will take a turn being the interviewer and interviewee.
2. Preparation (5 min)
   1. Each person considers and picks a “One Big Idea” topic – a topic they want to talk about. If they don’t see a word they want to talk about, they can write their own.
   2. Each person thinks about what they want to share – story or thoughts – on their idea. They can make use of MD inclusion tools, own objects or pictures or draw something.
3. In pairs (35 mins – 15 each round plus 5 minute discussion) Facilitator gives a two minute warning for summary/consent in each 15 min round
   1. Pick who will be interviewee in first round. In second round, roles will switch. Interviewer
      1. Asks interviewee if they still want to talk about the big idea they picked.
      2. Invites the person to share – using open questions, following where they lead, making personal connections.
      3. Takes visual notes (can be along with words) and checks in with the interviewee to see if they are staying with the interviewee’s story
      4. When time is almost up, makes sure they share what they heard – and asks the interviewee what circle of consent they offer for that: Just you and me? Your house? The community? Your family? Coworkers? Outside friends?
      5. Thanks and celebrates!
   2. Switch roles
   3. Take a few minutes to discuss what it was like to try this style of engagement.
4. Plenary (5 min)
   1. Invite group to share any insights from the experience of interviewing. What worked and didn’t? What was hard or not hard in either role?

* Call/Commitment
  + Closure Activity *Time:* 10 min
    1. Around the Circle: Each person has the chance to share or pass. Either:
       - What are you taking away? What from this session can you imagine trying again in your own setting? How and where would you use it?

Review of Plans

* Safe/Brave Space: Have you considered elements that create inviting, safe and brave space? See related resource sheet.
* Representational Curation: Have you planned for multiple means of receiving, engaging and expressing learning – visual, aural, physical, verbal, logical? Are diverse cultural voices represented?
* Expressing Learning: Do the activities allow participants to express what they’ve learned? Name how they will apply it?